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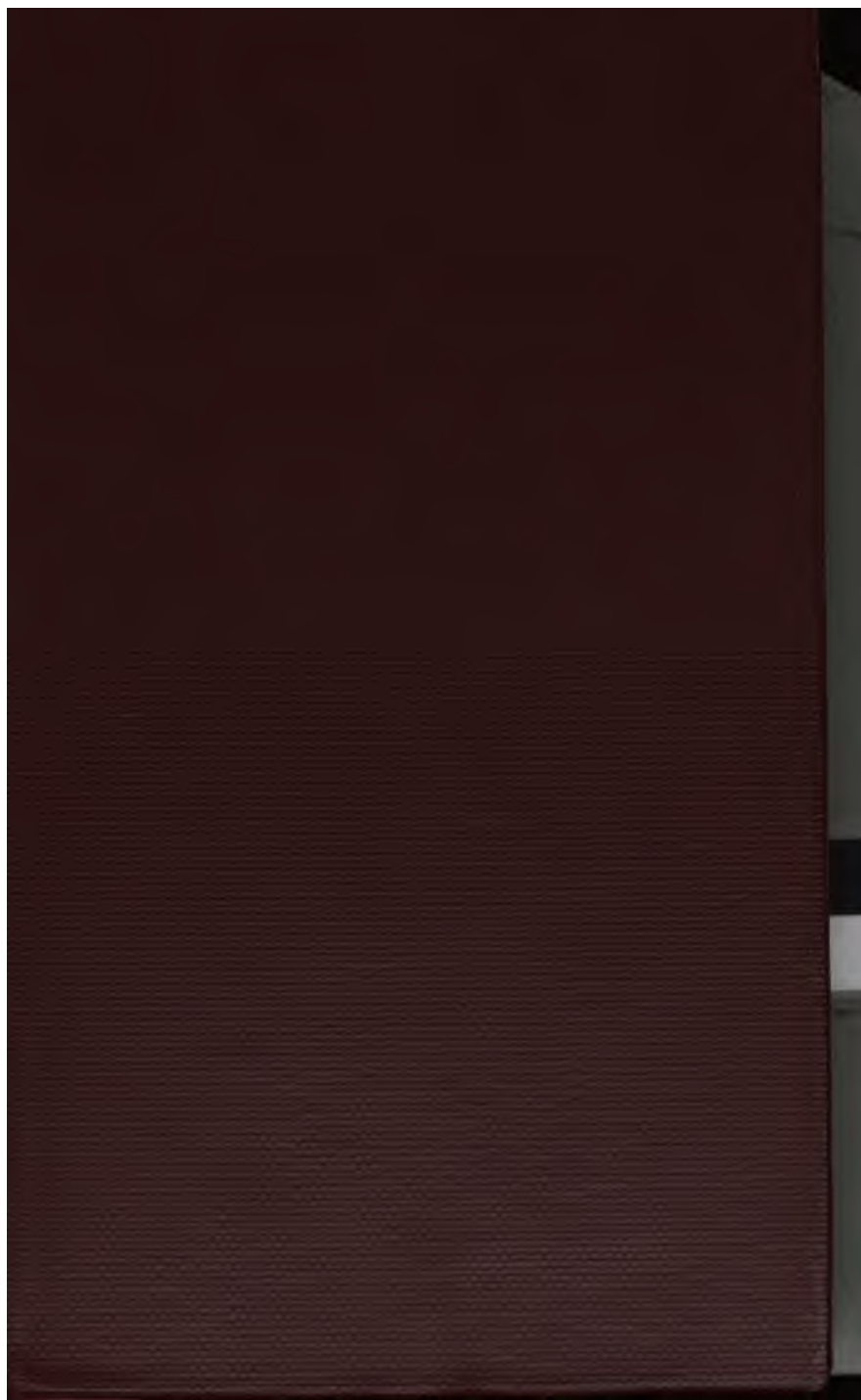
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SKETCHES
OF
NEW ENGLAND.
OR
MEMORIES OF THE COUNTRY.

BY
JOHN CARVER, ESQUIRE,
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE AND QUORUM.

Look now at American Saxondom ; and at that little *Fact* of the sailing of the *Mayflower*, two hundred years ago, from Delft Haven in Holland ! For it was properly the beginning of America ; there were straggling settlers in America before, some material as of a body was there ; but the soul of it was first this.

CARLYLE.

NEW YORK.
E. FRENCH, NO. 149 FULTON STREET

1842.

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TO YANKEE ABSENTEES,
THAN WHOM
NONE BETTER KNOW
THAT
'HOME IS HOME THOUGH NEVER SO HOMELY,'
THIS PICTURE OF
NEW ENGLAND
IS INSCRIBED
BY THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E .

THE Author of the following pages is a New Englander. He was born on the banks of one of her beautiful rivers, and was nurtured among her mountains. He boasts his descent direct from one of those stern old Puritans who chartered the Mayflower, and much of his childhood was spent on the very homestead, where the good man pitched his tent, and cleared his land. Like many of her sons indeed, he has, in riper years, wandered over sundry parts of the world, and has seen and known much of its excellence and beauty ; but he has always returned to the “ rude and rocky shore” of New England, with new love for her homes and her institutions,—new respect for her hardy sons. He is willing to confess that all his predilections are for New England ; that although “ Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, are better than all” her streams, he loves them not as well ; that he would live upon her barren soil, and die there among his kindred.

His opportunities of knowing her inhabitants have not been small, for it has been his lot to have resided in each one of her States, and to have seen every condition,—ranks there are none,—of her population, and he rejoices in the belief, that, among the thousand caricatures of her hardy yeomanry which have filled the world, he has been able to paint one faithful

picture, of those he loves as brethren. His description of manners is of what he has seen, and his delineations of character are of those, who have been his neighbors and acquaintances. There are many, whose memories will bear testimony to the faithfulness with which he has endeavored to transfer to paper an outline of that beautiful scenery, which is spread all over her hill-sides and river banks, and rich cultivated meadows; and not a few will follow him, through her homesteads, and into her cottages, with the awakened feelings of a glad and hardy boyhood.

Five of the "Sketches" have already appeared in the Knickerbocker, and the author would do injustice to his own feelings, did he not gratefully acknowledge the high, and certainly undeserved, encomiums they have gained from the Editors of Public Journals, and the favorable reception they have met from the community. He hopes only in conclusion, that he may not have written anything which will alarm the grave, or weary the gay; and having said thus much, he makes his most respectful adieu.

Dec. 13th, 1841.

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SKETCHES OF NEW ENGLAND.

SATURDAY EVENING.

It's no in titles nor in rank;
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
It's no in making muckle *mair*;
It's no in books; it's no in lear,
To mak us truly blest!
If happiness hae not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich; or great,
But never can be blest:
Nae treasures, nor pleasures,
Could make us happy lang;
The *heart* aye's the part aye,
That makes us right or wrang.—BURNS.

THE good old custom of observing Saturday evening as the commencement of holy time is fast going into disuse. In the cities and larger towns of New England it is already done away with, and the next twenty years of our innovating age will hardly leave a relic, in the most sequestered hamlet of the mountains, of what was half a century ago universal custom. I have called it a "good old custom;" and I believe that no one who has ever beheld its practical effect upon the condition of a community, or upon the individuals composing that community, will be disposed to deny

that it is so. Aside from the ties which all customs, handed down to us from our fathers, and which are associated with the memory of the Puritans, have over us, binding us to the holy principles which they loved and honored, there is something I believe in the very nature of the sacred observance of Saturday evening—in its calm preparations and unusual stillness—which fits us better for the duties of the Sabbath, and tends to render the day a more holy one: “sacred to the Lord, and honorable.”

There are places in New England where the custom is still observed in all its pristine strictness. They are not the manufacturing villages which are studded thickly along her wild and rapid streams, and which forever crowd the bustle and noise of labor’s appointed hour into the night as well as the Sabbath; nor are they the large towns where business facilities have drawn streamlets into them from the great tide of emigration; nor the capitals of the States; nor the market towns of the rich intervalles and meadows; nor the new settlements on the borders of the forest; but they are the quiet old homes of the peasantry of the mountains; the ancient farming towns of the commonwealth, whose soil, too rough to tempt the avarice of the indolent, has been handed down with the staunch virtues of its first cultivators, from sire to son, from the earliest settlement of the country. The external appearance of some of these old agricultural towns makes a singular impression upon a stranger. The time-worn church

is situated most likely on the highest and bleakest hill where its builders could find a public road, and behind it run off the long sheds, numbering as many stalls as there are chaises and wagons in the parish. Low gable-roofed farm houses of every shade and color, stand like decrepit patriarchs among the huge barns which have grown up around them. Red school-houses in the centre of each district; old cemeteries, with the slate head-stones half sunk in the earth, or hid in the rank luxuriance of the grass; whole miles of moss-covered stone-walls; the road, without regard to hills or points of the compass, winding from farm to farm; the powder-house, the pound, the poor-house, and county-house, are all objects of notice to the traveller. The antique garb of the inhabitants may strike him strangely; but if he be in a pleasant humor, the rustic civility which accompanies it, and which he meets with every where, cannot fail to delight him. The urchins, trudging homeward from school, greet him with doffed hats and ready bows; the checked frocks and aprons in their rear render the graceful courtesy; while the complaisant smile of the parasol'd and glov'd school-ma'am betrays her pride in the good breeding of her little flock. If it chance to be a pleasant afternoon of summer, he will find bright faces looking after him from every door; the grandame plying her knitting-needles or turning the foot-wheel, less for gain than as a thrifty pastime; the careful mother making "auld claes look amaist as weel's the

new;" the daughters carding the white rolls of wool or rapidly as shifting the bobbins of the lace-pillows; and all listening meanwhile to the simple ballad or fast chattering of the neighbor's news from the market town. The boys suspend their ball game while he drives over the green; the veteran 'Squire, the patriarch of the place,

"With his old three-cornered hat,
His breeches, and all that,"

respectfully uncovers his head, with the true dignity of the old John Hancock courtesy; the rustic maid, full blown as the summer rose, glances a coquetish look from beneath her dark eye-lashes, and hastens home to tell of the handsome stranger whom she met; and not least, the fat landlord—mine host of the Sun for forty years—meets him at the door, and welcomes him with a most gracious air to the well-sanded parlor.

You are in truth reminded at every step that nature is not out of date here, and that the standard which art and fashion have introduced over the world, which, like the bed of Procrustes, reduces redundances and racks out deficiencies, to suit its dimensions and measurement, has no dwelling-place among the people. Take your fishing-rod in your hand and travel through all the country; sit down by the huge sirloin of the farmer's table, or take pot-luck at the more simple meal of his daily workman; plant your cold and dripping limbs against the peat embers of the cottager's hearth, or before the roaring beacon of the landlord's

hall; trace every stream from its mouth through all its windings to its source, and chat with every one you meet; and the same unaffected simplicity; the same honest and manly frankness; the same independence of thought and manner, will arrest your attention every where.

The week-day life of these dwellers upon the old farms of New England is to be sure one of wearisome and uneasy labor. But then it is the labor of contentment and innocence, where pride has not dissatisfied the heart, nor luxury enervated the spirit. Nor is it unvaried by bright homes of mirthfulness and enjoyment. Beside the satisfaction with which the owner surveys his thick hay-cocks and waving grain, his fatted herds and heavy fruit trees, he finds scenes of frequent enjoyment in the regularly observed customs which each season brings. Harvest-time from the earliest haying to late in the autumn, is to the young men and maidens a perpetual scene of merry-making. The berrying parties in the dull days of July; the roast-corn frolics; the apple gatherings; and above all the long round of husking-bees, with their rich fun and well earned forfeits, the shows of white linen and fat cattle at the annual fair, and the nobly won premiums of the young housewife, furnish sources of enjoyment, long remembered, and anxiously counted on in the future.

But from all the scenes of merriment, the day of raising a new building bears off the palm. For weeks be-

fore the event arrives, the day is set, with the proviso of an adjournment to the first fair day, if bad weather should prevent, and invitations are sent by the owner of the building to the whole neighborhood, for miles around, so that oftentimes an hundred helpers will congregate to the gathering. If the enviable aspirant for the new building should chance to be a bachelor who is preparing his house for the reception of a wife, the merry-making is multiplied four fold. Custom makes it imperative that the bride-elect should be upon the ground at the close of the work, and to drive the last pin into the main brace of the corner-beam.—The frame is all complete; the last “heave yo, my men!” of the master carpenter has been given; each stud, and joist, and main-stay, and king-post, is fitted and fastened to its place; the workmen have all descended and ranged themselves in long file in front of the work; when the bride-to-be steps forward with uncovered head from her concealment, and taking the pin from the master, drives it with mallet in hand, merrily home. As soon as the last blow rings from the beam, she hastily retires to send in the banquet which she is expected to furnish; and loud huzzas are repeated, till the welkin rings again. The hearty meal and liberal drink:

“the brown October, drawn
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat
Of thirty years”—

wind up the day—the merriest day of the farmer’s calendar.

On Saturday evening, whatever may be the season of the year, no festivities can take place. The work and the play of the farmer's boy have then ceased, and young and old all prepare for the approach of holy time. Early in the afternoon, an attentive observer might notice something different from the ordinary avocations of the week; for the workmen are earlier by an hour, in quitting the field, the heavy-laden wains are more rapidly drawn to the granaries, the cows come by broad sunlight from the pastures, and the oxen are turned out upon the meadows long before the usual time of ceasing from labor. In-doors the female part of the household are equally forward with their work. The house has been thoroughly cleansed and "put to rights," from the disorder which the week's movements have occasioned; the long rows of shining pewter upon the dresser have been newly scoured; the proceeds of the last churning have been thoroughly worked and neatly put away; the new-made cheese is placed under the press; the beer has been brewed; and the batch of Indian bread—with its Sunday-noon concomitants, baked pork and beans—is safely deposited in the oven.

As evening comes on, the children are called into the house to undergo the thorough weekly ablution, and then, one after another, are called to learn the Bible questions for Sunday school. The men drop in, as each one finishes his duties; the boy has collected and put by all the farming utensils for the next week; the rich store of milk is brought in from the barn-yard; and

sunset finds the whole family partaking of the evening meal. All loud talk or boisterous merriment is, as if by common consent, suspended; and throughout the whole neighborhood, so strict is the custom of the observance of the evening upon all, no visits are made, nor unnecessary work engaged in. At dark the merchant has closed his store, and the mechanic has locked up his shop; and a stranger might well suppose that some fearful calamity was impending over the town, so silent is the whole scene around him.

Go into that low moss-roofed dwelling, whose summer walls are covered with the richest honey-suckle, or into the large painted one in whose shadow it stands, where the vast barns and thick out-houses indicate the owner's wealth, and you may have in either a picture of every family in town. In each the affairs of the household are arranged for the night. The clock strikes audibly in the corner; the lights shed their bright beams over a quiet and thoughtful circle; the very house-dog himself learns to know the evening, and has lazily stretched himself to sleep beneath the master's chair; while on the wooden chimney-piece lies an open Bible, ready for family worship. At eight o'clock the old church bell rings, the chapter and the prayer close the evening, and all retire to rest for an early rising on the day of our blessed Lord.

It was my fortune to visit the house of my grandfather during the month of July, in 1840. He had long since passed away with the generation in which

he lived, not a relic of which remained save the old pastor, who had been settled over his flock for more than sixty years. I knew he was to meet me at the corner of two roads, where the stage coach turned off towards the next post-town, and I had been reflecting at times, all the day, upon scenes which twenty years had not effaced from my memory, and speculating upon the changes which I should find the lapse of time had made upon the vigorous frame of my old and earliest friend. He had been before my mind's eye as he was during my childhood ; a noble, venerable man, the father of his people, habited in the most plain and homely manner ; not less loved and respected at home than venerated and esteemed abroad ; carrying along with him into all the intercourse of life "a mind void of offence"—a sincerity and earnestness which extended over every religious duty, from the blessing at the frugal meal to the higher ministrations of the pulpit. I remember him in his Sabbath services, giving to his flock the simple food of the gospel ; his grave demeanor as he walked from the house of God to the parsonage ; the easy and unassumed familiarity with which he greeted even the poorest of his charge ; and the total absence of all selfishness which his whole life showed. I thought of him in his visitations ; his quiet and cheerful aspect at the sick-bed ; his grave and solemn tones in the churchyard ; his relief to the poor, his comforts to the afflicted, his reproof to the wandering ; and I felt that to no man more than he, could the apostle's de-

scription be applied: "Blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality."

I found him still the same—unchanged, save in the increased whiteness of his thinning locks—and his hearty welcome made me forget the long years of absence which had passed. Leaving my trunk at a house near by, to be sent after from the parsonage, I took a seat by the old man, in the very same chaise, as it seemed to me, in which my boyhood used to rejoice, and turned with him down a deep shaded lane, which led to a remote part of the town. He was going to perform the last solemn rites at the funeral of a young member of his congregation; and as we rode along, he took occasion to narrate to me some of the incidents connected with her death.

Her father, who was a respectable and independent farmer, lived in a very charming but retired situation. I had known well in childhood that lonely farm-house, so far off among the beautiful wild green hills; and some of the brightest hours of my holidays from school had been spent in sailing over the lake that lay just below it, or in rambling through the woods that stretched far away to the eastward over a long range of rough mountains. An elder sister of the one who now lay dead had been my schoolmate and playmate, and I had not forgotten the bright faces of brothers and sisters to whom she used to bring me on Saturday afternoons—nor the pleasant greeting of the parents, that made me sure of a welcome whenever I could get

permission to accompany her. The other sons and daughters had grown up, and left one after another the old homestead ; until Agnes, the youngest—the petted child of old age, now fast creeping upon the parents—was the only one left to cheer the once merry fireside.

She had out-grown the mere unthinking gladness of childhood, but had not yet reached the time when selfishness mixes with the pure current of love. Unlike the others, nature had endowed her with the richest charms of beauty, as if to add a new link to the chain which bound her so strongly to her parents. With dark eyes and jet black hair, set off by a luxuriance of health which gives such a light and bloom to the countenance ; full of buoyant mirth and gaiety, softened by a mildness and propriety that won every beholder—she had been the pride and loved one of the village at every rustic gathering. From among her numerous admirers she had selected one who was, in every respect, worthy of her, and who, engaged in a course of collegiate study, in which he was gathering the brightest laurels, had led her to look forward to a preparation for a higher sphere of action than she had yet filled. His college vacations were spent at her father's house ; and the beautiful scenery of woods and mountains around them, where they sought out every fairy knoll and heath-covered fell, and among which they passed many a long Summer afternoon,

“ While time seem'd young, and life a thing divine,”
increased and strengthened the pure and devoted love

which had grown up between them. Indeed, no one could see her, in her neat and simple dress, with a profusion of dark glossy tresses escaping from her sun-bonnet, so unsuspecting and innocent ; now hanging upon his arm, with her soft dark eyes fixed upon his manly face, and anon bounding away over the hills, or along the narrow beach, with the lightness of a roe, laughing at his vain attempts to overtake her ; without confessing that here surely was real unselfish attachment.

It was during one of these walks, in the autumn before, that they sat upon the side of a large rock, the extreme end of which shot out into the deepest part of the lake, forming a bluff and bold shore for nearly a quarter of a mile. Wearied with the excitement of a long walk and the warmth of the day, Agnes had laid her bonnet in a crevice of the rock just above them, and was parting back the ringlets from her brow, when a light gust of wind lifted it from the rock, and rolled it over the side, toward the water. Both sprang from their seats to grasp it ; and the lover, in his haste to save it, unconsciously stepped upon a slippery part of the rock, and was precipitated at once into the lake. The poor girl sprang to the edge of the bank, but he had sunk, and probably becoming entangled in the weeds at the bottom, never again rose ! With the most pitiable screams she alarmed some men, who were at work near by, one of whom dived several times near the spot where he had disappeared, but without suc-

cess; and the poor girl was taken home—a raving maniac.

Months had passed after this heart-rending event, before Agnes had so sufficiently recovered as to be able to leave her room. And then how changed! The elastic step, and bright eye, and laughing face, were gone, without leaving a single relic of her beauty! The winter came and went; and the beautiful spring too, with its fresh breezes, and bright flowers, and soft tones, without one glad feeling in her heart. Never again was her bright and noble spirit lifted up; for her heart lay buried in her lover's grave. And the summer month was to witness the last office which her friends could pay her. She had been calm and unmurmuring under the whole, but it had long been too evident to all her friends that the heart was gathering about the citadel of life every drop of the vital current, and must ultimately burst in the struggle to relieve itself.

Declining the invitation of my friend to enter the house, I seated myself on a rustic bench beneath some birches, some rods below the house and out of sight of the mourners. It had evidently been a favorite retreat of her who was departed. Around the sides and back woodbines and evergreens had been tastefully intertwined, and wild rose bushes were thickly clustered all over the little hillocks behind. The view which it commanded of the scenery around was eminently beautiful. Below you the hill swept off toward the lake

with a gentle descent, covered with the brightest green-sward, and interspersed with frequent copses of large forest trees. Waters were unruffled by a single wave ; and one little wooded island, just off the shore, seemed hung in mid air, and looked like a fairy resort of coolness and beauty. Beyond were the deep blue mountains, over which the shadows were flitting like winged messengers, while their broadly indented summits were bathed in a flood of purple light. It was one of those delicious evenings which occur only during the long droughts of midsummer, when the rapid evaporation from the bodies of water during the day gives fragrance and coolness to the atmosphere of the coming night, and softens the light which the sun throws over the landscape just before setting, in a mellowness and radiance which no words can describe. It was in sweet unison with my own feelings and with the burial scene. As the procession moved slowly round the side of the hill, preceded by twelve maidens of the age of the deceased, dressed in white, and carrying wreaths of white roses in their hands ; as they passed on to the old burial-place, far up the ascent, with a slow and measured tread, over the grass-grown pathway, while the summons of the distant bell struck faintly on the ear ; as they listened around the grave to the solemn words of their grey-haired pastor, and casting their fresh flowers upon the coffin, turned to retrace their steps ; the whole was in such harmony with the spot, the hour, and the Saturday evening stillness, that it thrilled to the heart

with inexpressible power. It was like a whisper from the spirit-land, summoning the weary from the cares of earth, and bidding the mourner rejoice, that the lost one had carried with her the warmth of the young affections, the youth of the soul, the beauty and the freshness of the spring of being.

THANKSGIVING-DAY.

THANKSGIVING-DAY is the great festival of New England. Ever since the good ship *Martha* came laden with grain to the starving colonists of Plymouth, in 1630, from year to year has a day of thanksgiving been appointed and observed. Other festival days are of later origin, and have struck their roots less deeply in the life and affections of the people. Most of them our precise old ancestors would never recognize, and, eschewing the vanities as well as the doctrines of their oppressors, they pronounced all days of fasting and feasting set forth in the rubric to be manifest devices of the Tempter. They were too much in earnest—those grave old Puritans of the *May Flower*—to introduce aught into their religious polity which would tend to divert the hearts of the people from the serious business of life, and even in the hours of relaxation from labor, such as no body of men ever before so seriously undertook, or so unswervingly performed—they carefully watched lest some excess of joy might undervalue, some buoyancy of merriment hinder, the great object which they felt themselves bound to accomplish.

In the lone towns of Massachusetts, far away among her green, fertile hills, the impress of this stern, puritanic character may yet be plainly seen. The hardy sons of the soil still toil on, "through summer's heat and winter's cold," unmindful of the merry makings of the world around them. With them, religion, the religion of the Bible, as they received it unadulterated from their ancestors, coming forth as the real business of the heart, is blended with every daily task, and its requisites suffer no abatement, its solacements need no aid. May-day sees no trooping maidens gathering flowers from the fields, or dancing around the garlanded pole, nor is St. Valentine's greeted by fanciful missives from love-sick swains. Shrovetide, Lent, Ash Wednesday, Candlemas, would be unmeaning sounds to these contented home-dwellers of the mountains. Christmas is honored with no loaded board, New Year's with no warm-hearted salutations or friendly calls; and even the glorious Fourth of July scarce realizes the bell-ringing prophecy of the staunch signer of the Declaration of Independence. And well is it for the population of New England that such was the inheritance they received from their forefathers. With a flinty soil, rendered fertile by assiduous cultivation only, their rough mountain farms would have yielded but a pitiful subsistence to a pleasure-loving people. "Toil on, toil ever," is the homely maxim of their days, and it realizes for them the true independence which burdened fields and fatted herds will always give to a life of honesty and continued labor.

But the bright spot on the long year's unvaried toil is the day of annual Thanksgiving. No sooner have the summer months been completed, and the lengthening evenings of autumn rendered the daily labor less arduous, than the thoughts of the farmer are cast forward to the great day of rejoicing. The barns are already loaded with grain, which the heavy flail of the thresher is beating from the sheaf,—the crops of rich rowen are stacked beneath the thatched sheds, standing like ambuscaded sentinels in every ravine and valley,—the Indian corn is housed ready for husking,—potatoes and turnips, ruta-bagas and mangel-wurtzels, have filled the cellars for the winter's food of man and beast,—the barrels have been cleansed, and filled, and arranged in long rows, beside the sturdy bins of apples, each an earnest of the good cheer in which the long winter evenings will abound,—and the huge yellow pumpkins, scattered over the butted corn-fields, appear to the traveler like the only crops which the soil has yielded,—when the husbandman is just ready and waiting for his yearly jubilee. The weekly paper is diligently searched for the Governor's Proclamation, or for some notice that the time has been appointed; and the pastor, whose custom it is to read the announcement several successive Sabbaths before the day arrives, either to give due notice to every housewife of her approaching duties in the larder, or on the principle we all recognize of the superiority of the pleasures of anticipation to those of reality, is carefully watched,

for some indication, by countenance or manner, of the much desired intelligence.

No sooner is the matter made known, than all is hurry and bustle through the town. Neighbors exchange work with neighbors in the great business of butchering; and the squeals of dying swine seem the morning orisons, as the cutting down and packing of huge white porkers are the evening oblations of the whole country around. Joy and gladness pervade every kind of labor. Bright faces meet you wherever you go. The maiden looks more carefully after her poultry, assiduously counting the young turkies night and morning, that no wanderer fall into the snares of the prowling fox. The housewife tries and stores away her new-made lard, and gazes with proud satisfaction on the lengthened chains of her own home-made sausages. Young men and maidens, old men and children, all ply their respective duties with untiring cheerfulness, since the reward of a long year's toil is so near at hand.

As the day approaches, the bustling within doors is greatly increased. Minced pies, apple-pies, pumpkin-pies, custards, cranberry-tarts, and the whole array of pastry and preserves, protected from dust and flies by white linen napkins, take the places on the long shelves of the wonted shining pewter. Turkies, chickens in pairs, geese, ducks all ready for the spit, hang in the larder, flanked here and there by such legs of mutton, and rounds of beef, as the city alderman wots

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not of. Invitations have been sent and answered from children and grandchildren far away, and carriages from town, filled with happy faces, may now and then be seen, dashing along the road. It is indeed the approach of the Farmer's Jubilee, and the old man's eye glistens with joy, as he grasps again the hands of his noble boys,—the stay and the pride of his brave old heart, and bids them welcome back to the loved ones of his homestead. Aunt Phebe, and Aunt Ruth, and Aunt Lydia, are all there, to grow young again in the glad faces of bright eyed boys and girls; and the shouts and laughter from the carriage, as the horses turn up the long avenue, send such joy to simple and affectionate hearts, as no rank, or splendor, or growing wealth, could ever create. Almost every farm-house teems with its bidden guests, and the barn-yard, the old orchard, the cider-mill, and every corner of out-house and stable, is explored by youngsters, glad enough to escape from the pent-up atmosphere of crowded streets.

On the day preceding the festival, custom makes it imperative that the yearly presents should be given. Each liberal housewife remembers the pastor and the poor. The good old pastor knows well the day, and dressed in his best suit of home-made black, he is ready to receive the favors which his people never forget. Cheese, hams, turkies, chickens, crowd the good man's larder;—cheeses, the richest of the dairy;—jars of butter—boxes of honey—bushels of golden

pippins and grafted russets,—and even loads of fire-wood, come over hill and valley, from the thrifty farms, to gladden the inmates of the parsonage. The mechanic, too, contributes of his handy work, and the merchant from his store, to wake pleasant thoughts in that warm heart, which loves his flock next only to his God. Nor are the poor forgotten, for that holiday must come with as bountiful a hand to the lone widow and defenceless orphan, as to the richest man in town ; and churlish would he be considered, who should dole out, on that day, a *stinted* morsel, even to the thriftless beggar. Indeed it is not saying too much, to defy that house to be found, on Thanksgiving-eve, in which plenty is not a guest.

The day at last comes,—the glorious jubilee of the farmers' Harvest-Home. The sun rises clear over the mountains,—his beams fall aslant the frosted earth, lighting a thousand crystals on every blade of grass. All nature seems in harmony with the day. The forests, crowding the hill-sides, are clothed in their gorgeous drapery of scarlet and gold ; the deep, placid brook shoots up myriads of brilliant spiracles from its sedgy borders ; flocks of wild pigeons alight, chattering upon the stubble fields ; the lambs are frisking on the meadows, or leaping in long trains over the rough pasture pathway ; and every thing in the scene, save some unchanging old hemlocks, in the swamp, which stand frowning like withered spinsters, is smiling in joy.

Family service takes precedence over all duties of

the household. The returning children are gathered in the oak wainscotted parlor, dear to them from all the associations of childhood ; and the grandchildren, hushed to proper stillness by aunts and grandmama, are seated around, while the gray-haired father, from the family bible,

—“wales a portion with judicious care,
And ‘*Let us worship* God !’ he says, with solemn air.”

Then follows the substantial breakfast ; then, the preparations for church, the saddling and harnessing of horses, the ride down the long willow-shaded lane to the main road, and thence to the meeting house ; the service, the proclamation, to the concluding ejaculation of which every heart responds, “God save the commonwealth of Massachusetts ;” the annual sermon, best of all the year ; the solemn and earnest benediction ; and then the hearty greeting from good-wives and neighbors, when once again one’s own Christian name comes on the ear, in tones which make all past life seem like a dream.

And here I cannot but observe the singular incongruity, which is often manifest on Thanksgiving-day, between the place of worship and the congregation. At all other times there is an obvious harmony between the time-worn church, with its square uncushioned pews, and its quaint, massive pulpit, and the simple, home-spun worshippers, who are assembled within its walls. But now the congregation is interspersed with the wealthiest and fairest of the land. The distinguish-

ed advocate, the statesman, the millionaire on change, have each become boys again, and by the side of reverend sires and stout yeomen whom they claim as brothers, are worshippers once more at the altar of their childhood. Representatives, they, of the noble stock, which the Pilgrim land has sent forth for two hundred years, to spread her institutions and her virtues through the country!

But the great event of Thanksgiving-day, the maximum of all other events in it, is the dinner. The Thanksgiving dinner is in fact the summum bonum of the year. It is to this that all preparations have tended for weeks before, and at which the skill of the housewife, and the bounty of the homestead, are both displayed. At a board, loaded with every luxury which independent husbandry can produce, and around which are annually assembled the distant members of the same family, no wonder that it becomes the cynosure of the whole year to the farmer's heart. How well I remember those pleasant hours—in childhood—when those older than myself returned once again to take their places around the table, in manhood, when I myself came back as each year went round, to be welcomed anew to my own seat at my mother's side! How fresh are all those scenes to my mind! and what would I not give now to again find such a home, with its pleasant smiles, and soft-toned greetings, and bright eyed gifts, in the weary hours which the world's toil brings! How well too do I remember the first link which was

broken in that large family circle, and the deep feeling of sorrow with which each breast was burdened at our wonted joyous gathering. The youngest, our own petted sister, in whose opening mind, and ripening beauty each brother had been too proud, whose visits had gladdened by turns our winter firesides,—she, our blue eyed Mary, whose sunshine of hilarity had lit up our yearly meeting, was dead. Her seat, as if by voluntary agreement, was left unoccupied, and though no one mentioned her name, every thought was of what she had been to us all. It was the first time that our yearly merriment had received any check, and though each rejoiced in the greeting again of loved ones, yet all buoyancy of spirits, all glee, and joyousness, and mirth, were gone. Conversation flagged, our mother's good things were partaken in almost silence,—the sire's stories were untold,—and when at last each glass was filled for the wonted toast, and the old man's faltering voice uttered, "To ourselves and our loved ones at home and abroad," eyes, glistening with tears, met other eyes, over the full bumpered pledge.

There are other scenes too, which I can never forget. It was the custom at my father's to invite to the Thanksgiving dinner two or three individuals from the neighborhood, with whom all of us had been in the habit of daily intercourse in childhood. There was our family doctor,—the inveterate old bachelor,—whose practical good sense and inexhaustible knowledge, were the standard of my early aspirations. He was a perfect

matter-of-fact man, without wit himself, and yet the cause of wit in almost every one he met; of indomitable good nature, and possessing more of what the Phrenologists call concentrativeness, than any man I ever knew. Whatever he did was done with all his might, and whether he ate, or talked, or studied, or slept, or worked, or sang, he knew no weariness and no end. It was one and the same thing to him, on whatever his attention might be fixed; his whole soul was always given to the thing before him; and I verily believe, that he never felt a difference in the kind or amount of pleasure he received. He entered with equal naiveté upon the reading of some difficult piece of music, or the amputation of a broken leg: and discussed with as much apparent gusto the side bone of a well-roasted turkey, as the new message of the President. His ideas were never confused, except when the savory smell of turbot, venison, or calf's-head soup, came announcing on the air that dinner was nearly ready, and then, the transition from one subject to another, blended, for a moment only, incongruous thoughts, with the pure crystal flow from his mind; and for long hours, during your afternoon leisure, he would lull you by his reminiscences into the most delicious and wakeful repose. With the easiest disposition in the world, he was, in anger, the most violent man I ever saw, as if the smooth rivulet from the mountains had been swelled by sudden rains to a maddened and overwhelming cataract.

He was once called from his bed, in a bitter night in December, to extract a tooth for a person, who lived several miles from town, and after swearing at the messenger for his untimely call, and grumbling that the man could not send to him by daylight, he consented to go. Arrived at the house, the doctor unpacked his instruments, and placing the light so that he could see, he requested with no smooth palaver that the patient would point out to him the troublesome grinder. After sundry contortions, and exclamations, during which the doctor manifested no very patient spirit, the mouth was opened, and the tooth hastily examined.

"Do you think you can take it out, doctor?" asked the nervous sufferer, holding his hand upon his jaw, and turning his eyes away from the instruments.

"Yes!" answered the doctor very shortly.

"Are you quite sure, doctor?" continued the former.

"Yes!" answered the doctor again.

"And will it hurt me much, doctor?"

"Yes!" responded the doctor, adding this time a twitch of his head to his emphatic tone, that made the patient quietly lay back his head, and open his mouth.

The doctor bent forward his body, put in the turnkey, adjusted it upon the tooth, and was just about to turn it, when the patient springing back exclaimed, in a tone of agony, that he could not have it out."

"Oh, doctor, I never can! I never can have it out!"

"Why not?" asked the doctor.

"Because I am sure it will kill me! Oh I cannot! I cannot!"

"Well, sir," answered the doctor, assuming a look of savage ferocity, which one who had never seen him in anger, could not have believed his usually bronze-cast countenance capable of, "Well, sir, you *shall* have it out! Do you think I am coming out of a warm bed, all the way up here, this night, cold enough to freeze a Russian, to be teased and thwarted in this way? No! Sit down, I tell you, sir, and have it out peaceably, or I'll make you!"

It is needless to say that the patient made no further resistance, and that the troublesome member was forth coming in a twinkling; and the doctor soon back to his quiet bed.

There too was always found our country lawyer, jolly Julius Johnson. No mean pettifogger he, but a man endowed with talents of the highest order, and yet whose business to a stranger would seem to be, to smooth with his jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of every man's daily road. Dry, sarcastic, and yet ever goodnatured, he was the life of the dinner table. How vividly I recall the boast he one day retorted upon his host, who had been pushing him hard with jokes, and who had but the moment before lost a trifling bet of a quantity of ashes, which the hostess said were her own. Rising with great gravity, as his turn came, he gave, "Our Host,

His friend's reputation he covers with gashes,
And gambles away his respected wife's ashes."

He was one of those few, who could be witty without being offensive, and though ever seemingly approximating improperly in his allusions, he was always really chaste ; like la belle Fanny, balancing between decorumns and their opposites, he strictly kept the line, from which to deviate would be destruction. Wherever you found him he was the same merry, joke-loving companion, moving your mirth to excess, and battering at your ribs till they shook, nothing loth to be so shaken. I never saw him really serious but once, and that was at his wedding ceremony, when having lived for long years a happy Bachelor, he was at last to become the sober Benedict. Even then the serious face lasted but through the service, and the good night message he sent to one of his friends, was long the subject of untiring merriment.

To understand it, it is necessary to say, that a fine old gentleman, a friend of Johnson, was in the habit of telling a ludicrous story of a farmer, who, some days before his marriage came off, had been clearing a large piece of heavy timbered land : and as the season was rainy, he was in great trouble lest he should be unable to burn it over thoroughly,—a process necessary to a good crop the succeeding year. Indeed the fear of losing his labor had troubled him greatly, so that during the ceremony, and afterwards, while the clergyman was exhorting him on the duties and respon-

sibilities of married life, his thoughts were occupied only with his newly cleared ground.

“ A very important act, Mr. Lee, is this,” said the clergyman standing before the bridegroom, “ A very important thing in your whole life, and one which I hope you have carefully considered, and duly weighed. It may become to you a source of great comfort and satisfaction, or it may render you miserable. You have my best wishes, Mr. Lee, for your success in what you have now undertaken.

“ Thank you,” responded the bridegroom, “ it is very important, but I think I shall succeed, if I get a *good burn*.”

Though feeling really the seriousness of the marriage vows, and disposed to regard it in a proper light, Johnson had not forgotten the story ; so that after the ceremonies were over, and the son of his old friend was making his evening farewell, he whispered to him, casting at the same time a most inimitable expression toward his beautiful and blooming bride, “ don’t forget to tell your father, that I think I shall get a *good burn*.”

The dinner over, the preparation for the coming festivities commences. These are of various kinds throughout the town, as the habits of different families may dispose them. The more sober, see the Pastor and taste of his old sparkling cider ; some gather in a neighbor’s dwelling, and find rich jokes over the cracking of hickory-nuts and eating of the good dame’s pre-

serves ; some patronize the ball in my landlord's spacious chamber, and seek "no sleep till morn" in the excitement of the dance ; while others find, in the social chat of home, but seldom visited, more pleasure than abroad.

If there is snow on the ground, however, everything assumes a different aspect. No sooner is dinner passed, than a project is on foot to drive over to some country neighbor's, ten or fifteen miles off. The horses are all in requisition ; the largest sleighs are procured ; the colts are attached to the cutters ; and the whole family start off for a merry sleigh-ride. Two hours, at most, are sufficient for the drive, and cheerful faces and warm fires are waiting your arrival. Then comes the merriment of the evening. The young folks hastily arrange the dance, and while partners are procured, and places selected, old Peter Peterson, who has played for fifty years to sires and children, tunes up the violin. Contra dances, co-tillions and jigs, come each in their turn, and while the old people crack of marriages and courtships, births and burials, in the corner, or go with the housekeeper to cheese-press and pantry, the others merrily foot it till called to supper. Then comes the clattering of knives and forks, the cracking of the lively cider, the merry laugh, the broad jest, the quick repartee ; then the games which country folk only know how to enjoy,—some to the rattling gammon, some to the sober whist ; others play at hunt-the-slipper, or magic music, or blind-man's-buff ; and sports, rough and boisterous perhaps,

“ Where romping miss is hauled about,
By gallantry robust,”

but, nevertheless, undisturbed by a single care, close up the evening.

Miss Martineau has utterly condemned sleigh-riding, and has compared it to “sitting on a spring-board, out in the porch on a Christmas day, immersing your feet in a pail full of powdered ice, having a bell jingling in one ear, and the bellows blown in the other.” Such may be the sleigh-riding about the cities, but let me assure her, that a country sleigh-ride is altogether a different affair. I wish she could drive home with our party after the effervescence of Thanksgiving evening. The moon is up over the mountains; the broad mantle of pure white snow is spread over hill and valley, reflecting a whole world of coruscations in the soft, pure light; the trees are cased in ice; the bells ring sharply on the frosty air; the roads are perfectly trodden and smooth as glass; and the horses, eager for home, seem to fly over the surface. Thick buffalo-skins, wrapped about the whole person, afford complete protection from the cold, and the keenness of the clear atmosphere but adds to the excited feeling which the festivities of the evening had inspired. At first, the party proceed in long and rapid train towards home. Soon, some eager aspirant dashes by you in his cutter, to take the lead; others contend his power to do it, and urge on their rapid steeds: then comes the run,—the racing by,—the loud shout,—the cheerful huzza of the successful

sleigh load,—the dexterous driving,—the cheering on of the horses,—the crack of whips,—the hearty laugh at the defeated rivals; and last, not least, the glorious boasting of the party first at home.

Such is Thanksgiving day in the country-towns of the old Bay State. Such may it long continue to be, a day of joy and rest to her sturdy yeomanry, of plenty and luxury to the poorest dwellers in her moss-roofed cottages. The thought of its return has cheered many a lonely wanderer from his native hill-sides, and brought health to the home-sick heart of the noble boy, toiling in the city, for enough to raise the mortgage from the widowed mother's dower. Heaven send it to New England still to throw light and gladness around her broad inglesides,—to renew the bonds of affinity and affection under her paternal roofs,—and to bless her patriarchal grandsires at the unrestricted feast.

A COUNTRY STORY.

Good sir, reject it not, although it bring
Appearances of some fantastic thing,
At first unfolding !—WITHER.

It was on a bitter cold evening in the month of December, that a number of neighbors had called in to say good-by to my cousin John, who was to start the next morning on a trip down the country, to dispose of some of the products of the farm. An hour or two had passed off very pleasantly over a mug of flip ; the more distant visitors had dropped away as the evening wore on ; the lumber-box had been loaded with firkins of butter, and boxes of cheese, and flitches of bacon, and all those innumerable knick-knacks which the farmer's wife sends to the market-town ; the commissions for gowns and ribands, patterns and fashions, had been repeatedly given ; and the remaining visitors were moving their chairs, as if half reluctant to quit the bright fireside, despite of the sleepy nods and yawns of my good grandmother ; when my uncle roared out with his stentorian voice, " Stop neigh-

bors, don't go yet ! we'll have another mug of flip and Bowgun shall tell us a story."

It required but little urging to induce a general acquiescence in the proposal, for my uncle's flip and Captain Bowgun's stories were the toast of the whole neighborhood. Even my pretty cousin Jane, whose eyes had been closed for a long time, brightened up in the expectation of a tale, and every one's attention was directed to the Captain for the promised enjoyment.

"Well, boys, and what is it I'm to give you?" said Bowgun, in a tone something like that with which Matthews used to *début* in his 'What's the news at Natchitoches?' and whom our old story-teller resembled in more points than one,—“Well, boys, and what is it I'm to give you? Shall it be a love story, or a witch story, or a ghost story, or”——

“Oh, a love story, by all means,” exclaimed my fair cousin, whose eyes were brightening like diamonds at the thought, and turned full upon the old captain, “let it be a love story, and a good ending, wont you, Captain?”

“Whist, Jenny,” said my uncle, “what has such a child as you to do with love stories? Leave Bowgun to his own fancy, and I'll be bound he'll tell us something pleasant.”

“Doubtful about that!” answered the Captain; “such cold nights as this, with three feet of snow in the old sap lot, and the prospect of a tramp through it, with the wind dancing rigadoons all the way, isn't just

the thing to wake a man's ideas up to a good story. Any how, since your father asks it, I'll tell you one befitting the night, which I heard long ago, when I was a child ; it's about the old haunted ground, over in Campton, where you know neither sheep, nor cattle, nor horses, ever live or thrive ; and it was once,—but that's long ago,—the best piece of land in the country ; and every traveller noticed how rich the farms were over the river."

" Stop, Captain !" said my uncle, interrupting him ; " it's dry work, talking, —taste a drop of this, just to wet your whistle ;" and filling a pint mug with the rich, foaming beverage, he handed it to the story teller, with " Much good may it do you, neighbor ; bless your kind soul !"

The old man took the mug from my uncle's hand, and sipping once or twice from the cream-like surface of the hot liquid, which, unfortunately he loved but too well, he smacked his lips and replied, " Thank you, Square ; that goes to the right place ; now for the story."

" I've told you," continued he, " that it's about the Campton marshes, where, you know, the cattle, and sheep, and horses, of the best farmer in old Strafford, would be scarce as my own in half a dozen years. It's been tried out and out repeatedly by many a hard worker ; as any one may know from the large barns and snug houses, for many a mile, all unroofed by the winds and crumbling to ruins, with nobody to take care

of them, and not a soul to live there, except it may be some old wrinkled crone, who has more to do with Old Nick than with anything in this world. And yet the grass grows on the meadows as I never saw it anywhere else, except in old Oxbow, up in Coo's; and the land runs away so smooth and so green, as far as the eye can see, that it would do one's heart good to ride through it, if you didn't know that it was as deceitful as it is fair. Some people say, it's the fog that rises every morning, and makes it unhealthy: and others, that the water is bad, and breeds diseases in the stock who drink it; but, to my mind, it's more the curse of Satan on what the Lord made good, than anything else, as the story I am going to tell you will show.

"There lived once upon the Bearcamp one William Montgomery, or, as he was called, Bill Mink, in consideration of his being the blackest white man anywhere about. It's a long time ago, before old Captain Lovewell had his battle at Fryburgh with Powell and the Indians, when there was not a road from the Winnepeissaukee to old Hampton, nor more than fifty settlers from Red Hill up to Canada. This Mink was the wonder of the country all about for strength, for he'd think nothing of felling an acre of first growth between sun and sun, and trimming it to boot: and he beat Sampson in throwing a rock, or swinging an anvil with his teeth, or taking a barrel of cider as you would a two gallon wallet up at arms length, and drinking from the bung-hole. But though he was the leader in all

the country frolickings, he was as mild-tempered and peaceable a fellow as lived in the world, and would not have hurt a fly. For this reason many folks, who did not know Bill, fancied he was a coward; and some men found, to their cost, that, though he was good-natured to a fault, yet he was not to be abused out of reason. Young Sam Hurchley, a bullying, bragging tailor's apprentice, in the heat of a row which they all got into at a country fair, threw a glass full of spirits into Mink's face and eyes, and so maddened him, that he caught him by the collar like the grip of a vice, and tossing him into the air as if he had been a real puppy, as he was, and catching him at arms-length as he came down, so frightened the poor breeches-mender, that he never looked full in a man's face afterward.

"Well, it happened that Bill Mink was one evening at a house-warming, two or three miles from home, where there was no lack of good things to eat and to drink. Bill was the life of the company; and what with singing of songs, and telling of stories, eating of turkeys and chickens, and roast beef, and bacon, and drinking of good old cider, and New England and the best of Metheglin, he got somewhat irregular; not worse than the others, perhaps, for all were hearty-like; and as they came home the woods rang with the shouts and laughter of the merry blades. It was a clear cold evening in December, and the frost sparkled in the moonlight, like diamonds and jewels. Bill's path lay farther on than the others were to go; and as they

turned off, one after another, they bade him "good night and a pleasant walk home." Bill did not like the idea of a two-mile walk through the woods and nobody with him, but still he held up his spirits—and whistling to keep off the thoughts of spirits and bogles—for Bill was a firm believer in ghosts and all that—he went on his way. The path lay along by the side of a hill for nearly half a mile, and then ran down into an interval of the Bearcamp, a tract of rich soil which Bill had bought of the proprietor, making a journey all the way to Boston on purpose, and where he meant to build him a house in the earliest spring. As he came down the hill, he thought he heard a sound over among some white pine that he had selected for framed timber; and listening a moment, he made sure that some one was chopping his trees. Bill's temper was up in a minute; so, springing into the forest, he pretty soon came upon a black stout man, with a shock of curly black hair, who was most lustily cutting away at the finest tree in the woods.

"'Halloo, there!' cried Bill, 'what in the devil are you doing?'

"'Chopping trees!' answered the black man, without so much as looking up, or stopping for a minute.

"Bill was confounded at the black man's cool impudence, and hesitating a minute, he replied, 'So I see; but do you know this is my timber?'

"'You lie!' surlily answered the black man.

"Bill's temper was up in a minute; for though you

might tease him all day, and he never get angry, yet he was a fellow of spirit, and would take the lie from no man. 'What's that you say?' asked he with a stern voice, advancing his foot, and showing a pair of huge fists, just ready to strike. 'What's that you say, sir?'

"'I say you lie!' said the other, never once looking up, nor taking any notice of Bill's threatening attitude.

"'Take that, then!' said Bill Mink, dealing him a blow which would send the stoutest to the earth, but which had no more effect on the black man than if he had been made of iron.

"'Ha, ha, ha!' shouted the negro, with a short fiendish laugh; 'so you dare to strike me, do you? I'll pay you for this. You shall ride round this land you call yours, my good fellow, and point it out to me, and I'll drive;' and cutting down a stout beach sapling, he commenced peeling the bark into a broom, such as old Dinah makes to sell at the corner.

"Bill Mink was now terribly frightened, and knew not what to do. He could not run away, for it was a long mile to the cabin, and he was sure the black man would overtake him before he got half way there. He could not conceal himself among the tall trees; and as for opposing a man who cared no more for his blows than if they had been pops of parched corn, it was hopeless enough. The only way he could think of, was to appease the black fellow with an apology for striking him, quit his claim to the land, and so try to come off

on good terms. Mustering all his courage, then—for he trembled like an aspen leaf—Bill stammered out, ‘I say, friend, you may have the timber, only forget the blow I gave you, and so quit even.’

“‘Ha! backing out, are you?’ returned the other, who had now completed the broom and held it out to Bill: ‘that wont go! Here, mount this horse, I tell you, and ride round your farm.’

“Bill tried to object, but the black fellow’s eyes sparkled like fire, and he was forced to stride the strange horse. No sooner had he mounted, than the broom elevated itself above the surface of the ground, and started off over the intervale. On they went, the black fellow mounted behind him, up the hills, over the river, through the valleys, harum-scarum-like. Bill Mink was in a terrible fright, as you may well believe, for the courage of the liquor had all gone, and he didn’t think his life worth a rush peeling; so clinging with one hand to the broom—which was none of the easiest to ride—and taking off his hat with the other, and making a submission to the black fellow, he begged him to stop. ‘I’m at your honor’s mercy entirely, and I beg Heaven’s pardon, and yours likewise, sir; and sure, if I thought that it was on account of my touching you——’

“‘Touching me!’ roared the black fellow: ‘D’ye call that blow touching me—or is it game you’re making?’

“‘Well would it become the like of me,’ said the

blarnying Bill, 'to make game of a gentleman like yourself, and one that would not think it worth his while to hurt or harm a poor devil like me, who got a little overtaken with drink ;—curse it ! for it's like to be the ruin of me at last. Oh, Jenny, it is little you're dreaming, in your snug bed, what an end I have come to ! and my poor children—' and at that Bill blubbered out, like a great schoolboy.

" ' Well, Bill, and what bargain will you make with me, if I let you off free ?' says the black man.

" ' Bargain, sir ?' answered Bill ; ' any bargain in the wide world this blessed night that you may ask of me, will I make with you. Only name it, and see if I do not make it and keep it to your heart's content !'

" ' Bill Mink, you're the very man for me !' answered the black fellow ; ' and I'll make you the richest man in the county, if you'll only promise me two or three things, and no harm to come to you either !' "

" But he lied, didn't he ?" interrupted my Uncle, who was swallowing down the story word for word as fast as the old man could tell it.

" Lied ! to be sure he did !" answered Bowgum ; " it's the Scripture that calls him a liar from the first, and the father of liars. 'Twas Bill Mink's soul that he wanted—the cheat that he is—as you shall hear in a minute ;" and taking the last drink from the mug, he resumed his story.

" Let me see—whereabouts was I ? Oh, I remember : The devil says he——"

"Then the black man was the devil after all, was he?" said my grandmother.

"To be sure he was," replied Bowgum; "but don't interrupt me. 'So you'll promise,' says the devil, 'to do what I tell you?'"

"'I will,' says Bill.

"'Well, then, you shall have more shining dollars than there is in every farmer's chest between here and Dover.'"

"'When?' says Bill; for the mention of the dollars, and he so poor a man, had quickened his appetite for the bargain. 'When?' says he.

"'This very night;' answered the black man, 'only sign this paper, to do what I say!'"

"'And what is to be done,' asked Bill Mink.

"'Advertise this land on the Bearcamp for sale!' said the black man.

"'Well?' answered Bill Mink.

"'Go to Boston; publish it in the papers; cut it up into building lots; draw it out on a map; lay roads; plan streets; cry up the water privileges; erect manufacturing; build churches; open stores; put up houses'——"

"'What, all on paper?' inquired Bill Mink, who was quite out of breath, at the rapidity of the directions.

"'To be sure!' answered the black man.

"'Open a land office in Boston; employ a clerk; send circulars over the city; cover your table with plans and drafts; fill your desk with deeds; work

hard ; think much ; talk largely ;—in short, become a flourishing land speculator.’

“ ‘ Aye, aye,’ said Bill Mink.

“ ‘ Encourage buyers with fair promises and long credits ; work up an excitement ; identify it with religion ; seduce the parsons ; coax the deacons ;’——

“ ‘ Egad, I will,’ said Bill Mink.

“ ‘ In short, build up a great city where a tree is not cut, nor a swamp drained ; stir up emigration ; enlist capitalists ; promise dividends ; cheat the widows ; rob the heirs ; lure the merchants to overtrade ;’——

“ ‘ I’ll lure them to the devil,’ said William.

“ ‘ You are the very man for me,’ exclaimed the black fellow ; ‘ now sign the paper.’

“ By this time Bill was dismounted from his awkward steed ; so sitting down on a half-decayed log, he signed the paper, and started for home.

“ Before spring there was great excitement in the good city of Boston, about the wild lands in New Hampshire. Governor Wentworth had recently been appointed to preside over the province, and was making preparations to build him a splendid mansion, far in from the sea-board. Sellers were about in every quarter. The land was said to be the most fertile of any in New England, and nothing was talked about save city lots and splendid sights, pine timber and intervals, mill privileges and new roads. Great fortunes were made in a day ; and he who yesterday wrought laboriously for the mere sustenance of life, to-day stood

foremost as the wealthiest man on 'change. To be sure, some of the grave old puritans, who had got rich by selling pins and needles, shook their heads, and doubted to what all this would grow : but this was to be expected—they were behind the age, and every body pronounced them to be obstinate unbelievers.

“ Among the great men whom this ebullition of the times threw prominently upon the surface, was one Mr. Montgomery, who had a land office in Cornhill. Nobody knew who he was, or whence he came, and nobody cared. It was enough that he lived in princely style, owned houses on Beacon Hill, gave costly dinners, set up a superb livery, and was the most civil, complaisant, and urbane man in the whole city of Boston. His office was crowded from morning to night with eager buyers of new lands in New Hampshire, and his opinions were quoted as absolute in all matters relating to the value of real estate on the frontiers. Such bargains as he had sold were never before known, and the city he had laid out on the Bearcamp river, it was believed, would rival Boston in less than fifty years. Was any one desirous of growing suddenly rich, let him go to No. 17, Cornhill ; was a merchant in want of investments, Mr. Montgomery would sell him such stocks as even London could not boast ; were a family of rich heirs desirous of secure dividends, the land office was the never-failing resort ; —in short, to every one Mr. Montgomery seemed the moving spirit of the time. The golden age had again

come to visit the world, and William Montgomery, Esquire, was the Midas who had brought it.

The summer passed away—autumn came and went—chill winter set in—and still there was no abatement of the great bargains in New Hampshire lands. The coming of spring was looked forward to with great interest, for then the first colony was to move northward, to the far-famed Bearcamp. Houses were framed—bricks were imported—mechanics were hired—stores were provided—farming tools were bought up—furniture was packed, and every thing made in readiness to start by the earliest spring. The El Dorado of the western continent had in very deed at last appeared in sight.

“In the midst of all these expectations, when the whole city rang with the noise of busy preparation, one morning No. 17 was closed. A crowd was gathered about the door at the usual time of opening, but no clerk appeared. An hour passed by—the crowd had increased far up and down the street, and great impatience began to be manifest, when it was whispered by somebody, that Mr. Montgomery had been absent from home all night. A messenger was despatched to ascertain the truth of the report; but before he could return, a person came running up the street, announcing that Mr. Montgomery was probably drowned, his hat and cane having been found floating on the water, near Long Wharf. The consternation was great:—a general meeting of the citizens was

called together—boats with grappling irons were ordered to drag the bay :—but nothing was ever found of the body, and to this day it remains in doubt what was the fate of the land speculator.”

“ And what became of his property,” asked my uncle.

“ Oh, the town appointed trustees to settle that, but they did not find enough to pay a penny on a pound. His houses were mortgaged, his chests were empty, his horses and carriages had disappeared, and his bonds and mortgages were all blank paper, handsomely labeled and sealed ; his”—

“ But the old intervale in Campton ? who owned that ?”

“ That was cleared and settled, after a time, by some of the buyers, but the owners never flourished ; and to this day there is not a thriving farm on the Bear-camp.”

“ No wonder !” said my grandmother, “ *for the devil sold it.*”

SUNDAY IN THE COUNTRY.

All was so still around, methought
Upon mine ear that echoed hymn did steal,
Which 'mid the church where erst we paid our vows,
So tuneful peal'd. But tenderly thy voice
Dissolved the illusion.—*Mrs. Sigourney.*

ONE of the liveliest descriptions in Göethe's *Faust*, is that of Sunday, as it is spent by the middling and lower classes in Germany. William Howitt alluded to this description in his *Rural Life in England*, a work, by the way, full of the most delicious pictures of country scenes, and well worth the perusal of every man of taste, and he sets off by way of contrast his own charming account of a summer's Sunday in England. Beautiful, and true to life undoubtedly, as both these pictures are, there is something wanting about them, by which they fail fully to realize our idea of a Sunday in the country towns of New England. Making due allowance for the difference of national manners, there is still something, even in the most remote corners of the old countries, something made up from the influence which the associations of former time, or of a national church, or of,

'The old heroic halls from ages grey,'

possess over the minds of the population, which makes a wide disparity between their religious character and the fruits it produces, and our own. With all their world of beauty in the cultivated scenery around them ; their luxuriant plants, and blossomed branches, and sunny walls of cottage and castle ; their fair hills and flowery dales, and deep secluded vallies ; give to me my own native New England, whose rugged mountains overshadow a people to whom the Sabbath is not only a day of rest, but of worship ; and whose deep vallies in their stillness, on that holy morning, reflect back the pure tranquillity of heaven !

During the hour alluded to in a former chapter, I spent a Sunday in my native town, on the north shore of the Winnepiseoga Lake. It is the country in its strictest sense, for its population is made up almost exclusively of farmers—the true, hardy, home-loving farmers of New Hampshire. So far as I have ever learned, it is remarkable for nothing, saving that a stranger might notice a habit which has attained here, as in most of the northern towns in the State, of designating every small cluster of buildings as a *Corner*, and of adding to it some cognomen, sufficiently characteristic and amusing. The only three white painted houses in the town stand near together, and have thereby gained the appellation, par excellence, of *The Corner*. Within two miles of this, are to be found Upper Corner, Lower Corner, Cram's Corner, Uncle Jake's

Corner, Mackerel Corner, Barville Corner, and Tough-Scrabble Corner ; eight corners in one town ! Enough, one would think, to satisfy the most fastidious lover of hard names, and popular gathering places.

The calm, basking sunshine had lain on the green landscape with such richness and beauty on Saturday evening, that one could not distrust the pledge for a glorious morrow ; and I had risen early, early even for the country, to enjoy the morning. It was indeed one of peculiar beauty. There was not a cloud to be seen in the heavens. The sun was not yet up, but his brightness came before him over the mountains, as if waking them from their slumbers. All was still, as one loves it to be on a Sabbath morning, save the sweet orisons of the red-breast and oriole, going up to him, “ who feedeth the birds,” and the sound of a distant waterfall breaking clear upon the ear. I stood upon a little eminence, which overlooked the country a few miles around. The sun had now risen, the earth looked beautiful and new as at the creation, and lo ! sunward a hundred peaks were glowing in gold and amethyst, like giant spirits of a world. Over the whole landscape there is a stillness, showing that man rests from his labors, and every thing rests with him. The sturdy ox which had toiled at the plough or dragged along the weary load, through the successive week days, is grazing quietly on the sunny slopes ; the cows are sluggishly moving towards the pastures ; the milk-maid suppresses her song as she bears the plentiful

store from the farm-yard ; and the very herd boy looks cautiously far up and down the lane, before he ventures the stone, twice aimed, at the unoffending chip-muck.

“ All look as if they knew the day and hour,
And felt with man the need and joy of thanks.”

The breakfast is partaken in quietness ; the Sunday morning breakfast of rich brown mush ; the tables are cleared and set away ; and the household are assembled around the family altar, while from the “ big ha’ Bible,” the father “ wales a portion with judicious care,” and leads in the devotions. After prayers, each betakes himself to preparations for church. The children are made ready in well-brushed Sunday clothes, with clean faces and smooth hair, and seated to their lessons for the Sunday school. So still is every duty performed, that the click of the hall clock is audible through the house, and the sense of religious awe seems to live in the very atmosphere.

As we took our way to the church, the same stillness covered the whole face of nature, broken only by the hum of the honey-bees gathering sweets from the way-side flowers, or the cawing of the crows from the distant fields. Neatly dressed people were moving in groups towards the sanctuary ; the bright-eyed girl and her mother ; young men, children, and the gray-headed, with a sobriety and decorum in unison with the solemnity of the day. The church was a neat white building, standing just out of the deep mountain forest, and overlooking a wide country of water and

land, many miles around. It had no bell, no steeple, no organ; nothing but the four unadorned walls, the simple pews, and the high massive pulpit, where the rich man found no incitements to his pride, nor the poor man temptations to his envy. Every thing was in keeping; the people with the house, the pastor with his people. There was not only a sincerity and solemnity, but also a congruity about the whole, which I have often felt the want of in more splendid sanctuaries.

Notwithstanding the change which increasing years brings over our affections, I can never visit the church to which I was wont to go in my childhood, without deep emotion. The place, the occasion, the old form of worship, carry one insensibly back to former days, and make him forget for a time the interval which has elapsed. The changes which have taken place affect the mind with sadness. That is the same scene from the windows on which I used to gaze during the service; this is the same pulpit; these are the same quaint, old fashioned pews. But where are the inmates? How few, very few of them remain! The scythe of Time has made dreadful havoc. The old have passed away like a tale that is told; the mature, such as remain of them, are gray-headed, and bending under the weight of years. Boys are transformed into the thoughtful fathers of families, and jocund thoughtlessness has given place to the furrowing lines of care. Around me is a generation which mushroom-like, has

sprung up in my absence ; and more than once, I mistook the children for their parents, pictured in my remembrance as if they had been destined never to grow old.

Our good pastor, whose gray head and kindly greeting have so associated old age in my mind with benevolence of heart, that I can never yet separate them, is not here. How well I remember his grave deportment, his calm and deliberate air, and his venerable presence, which inspired an awe I have never since felt in the presence of any man. He has gone, years since, to receive the reward of "those who turn many to righteousness."

Our country doctor, too, with his red, round face, and small, gray eyes, is gone. He sat in the pew yonder, just below the pulpit ; and it requires no great stretch of fancy, to see his queued and powdered head peering above the railing, or to mark his grand and self-complacent air, which however offended no man's self-love, as with cocked hat and top boots, for he always affected the old style of dress, he followed the minister out of the church. He was a man of great eccentricity of character, and had he fallen in the way of Charles Matthews, it would have made the comedian's fortune. During his professional studies, the doctor had been the pupil of the celebrated Warren, whose name is so intimately associated with American history, by his lamented death at the battle of Bunker's Hill ; and in his eyes, Doctor Warren was the greatest

man the world ever produced. If you differed from him in opinion, no matter what the subject might be, he would all at once stare you in the face, draw his long queue through his hand, and close upon you with the unanswerable argument, "Sir, the immortal Dr. Warren thought so!" After this there was no more to be said, for Doctor Warren was the oracle, whose authority admitted neither of doubt nor appeal. He had great vivacity and a fund of anecdote, was well read in his profession, and had a strong fondness for antiquarian research. His office was a perfect Noah's ark, hung with old paintings, and stuffed full of all sorts of curious things. Alas! that kind heart and busy head are now resting in the quiet grave!

And Uncle Jacob too is dead! Kind-hearted, easy, thriftless Uncle Jacob! He was our oldest man in town, and his stories of olden time were the wonder of my childish imagination. He had served in the war of our revolution; and nothing delighted the old man more than to find a good listener to his long stories:

"While thrice he vanquished all his foes,
And thrice he slew the slain."

If one might believe him, his feats had been more marvellous than those of Munchausen himself. He was none of your hesitating, half story-tellers, ever distrusting your faith, and doubting how far he should go; but a bold, hearty liar, plunging at once into the very fulness of your credulity. Indeed, you could never disbelieve him while he was talking to you, for his

well bronzed face was turned toward you in earnest sincerity, and the current of his thoughts flowed as clearly as one of our own mountain streams. In fact, I doubt if he had not cheated himself into a belief of the wonderful feats he recounted. My earliest recollections of him are as the leader of our choir, and until I left the place he sang every Sunday, I was about to say, "to the honor and glory of God," but I fear it was sometimes to the honor and glory of the sons and daughters of music around him, in whose proficiency he so exulted.

And Aunt Anne—not Uncle Jacob's wife, gentle reader—oh no! shade of the virgin queen shield us! for the bare supposition of such a thing, would start her very bones from their mouldering cerements! our maiden Aunt Anne, too, is gone. She was the very beau ideal of state aristocratical virginity; a meddling, gossiping, curious, busy old maid. The stiff, starched figure, sitting upright in her pew, and her grimalkin eyes, peering from beneath her false puffs, during prayer and sermon, lest some graceless youth should gaze on the fair neice by her side, were the fear and hatred of my boyhood. She was a genuine daughter of the Doleful family. Sitting sour in her solitary blessedness, watchful lest the corners of her mouth should relax into the sin of smiling, I verily believe she would have spoken evil of the sun, when he edged the dark clouds with light. But let her pass. She too sleeps in the church yard:

"De mortuis nihil, nisi bonum."

But it was not the aged only whom I missed from their wonted seats in the house of God. Many of the associates of my boyhood were gone ; some doubtless to distant places, but many more to the quiet home of the grave. As I walked through the church-yard after the evening service, there were many names on the plain head-stones which I remembered, and with which were associated the pleasantest scenes of my early life. Among them were some I had loved ; loved as the heart only loves in the spring-time of its being. Many of them had died young. I could not mourn for them, for they had carried with them the warmth of the affections, the beauty of the soul. One slept there, who, in her gentle and spotless virtue might have claimed kindred with the beautiful spirits of heaven. Perfidy had never chilled, unkindness never wounded her. Her heart was still in the bloom of its first emotions, and with its last throb turned to the eye of love, which for her had never changed.

But I have wandered far away from my description of a Sunday in the country, and it is too late to retrace my steps. To those who would know the true value of the Sabbath, as it dwells in the heart of a descendant of the Pilgrims, from which all worldly thoughts are banished, and when the mind is freed from every earthly association, we would point out the plain good men who yet live in the secluded glens of New England. I have dwelt far from the home of my childhood, and have seen the day spent in rest, in mirthful-

ness, in formal devotion ; but never yet has it returned to me, without bringing with it the associations of awe, and love, and humble piety, which are connected with the sunny tranquillity and unbroken quiet of a Puritan Sabbath.

GOVERNOR WENTWORTH.

Pray you, use your freedom ;
And so far, if you please, allow me mine,
To hear you only ; not to be compelled
To take your moral potions.

MASSINGER.

WE left Portsmouth on a fine morning in August, to visit the White Hills. The land in the neighborhood of the commercial capital of the Granite State lies in fine ridges, interspersed with large intervalles of alluvial soil, comprising some of the most fertile sections of New England. Some fine country seats are to be seen just out of the town, with handsome parks, and well-kept lawns. The farms are highly cultivated, and the large fruit orchards of choice and thrifty trees, indicate the industry and taste of the owners.

The lands all around us, as we drove along, were lying fallow, clad in soft gray, or green, or russet clothing ; dotted with slender poplars, lessening in the distance, up to the low, far range of azure hills ; patches of wood were scattered all over the landscape, and cattle and sheep in every picturesque attitude, demanding in vain the pencil of some old Dutch master. And then the glorious vivifying breezes, awakening all the unconsciousness and the confidence of existence ; the

very vitality of life—its blessing, its hope, and its joy ! I do not believe the richest portion of England can boast of more profuse and crowded vegetation, where Nature seems to have poured out at once all the treasures of her lap. The waving of the heavy wheat, ripe to the harvest ; the dark green fields of Indian corn ; the plains of vines, loaded with the weight of their treasures, and showing their golden sides above the vegetation they rioted in, almost realized to the eye of Fancy the fabled dreams of the Gardens of the Hesperides.

In Stratham especially, we remarked several farms of great beauty, over which were scattered clumps of the elm and maple, and on the borders of the little stream, the rich green willow. It was here that Judge Wingate, for a long time the oldest graduate of Harvard College, and one of the prominent members of Congress under the administration of Washington, lived and died. The influence he exerted over the inhabitants of the town, in keeping alive a spirit of improvement, and encouraging a good taste in husbandry, is still to be observed in the farms of his neighbors, and in the intelligence and enterprise of the people. He was a genuine country gentleman of the old school ; courteous to strangers, a dear lover of hospitality, and never so much delighted as when he saw happy human faces gathered around his social board. His mansion, although not so large as those of some of the neighboring gentry, could always furnish beds for friends and

casual visitors. I have never encountered more genuine comfort and hilarity, than at his fireside. Go when you would, you were always sure to meet a cordial greeting, and a room full of company, and the gay old man the youngest of the party. The good Judge especially loved to make his house a scene of enjoyment to young folks; and his heart in the winter of life, like the hardy evergreen, showed all the freshness of spring to the children around him.

It was afternoon before we reached the old town of Dover. The entrance from the south, down a long street shaded by graceful trees, with its white-painted houses on each side, makes a pleasant impression on the traveller; more pleasant, perhaps, from the succession of delicious pictures which are presented in the ride from Portsmouth—garden, and lawn, cottage, hamlet, and village—all composed of the same objects, it is true, but in a variety of combination that precludes all weariness or satiety. There is a beauty in all the farm-houses you pass, which is exceedingly attractive, from the neatness within and without, and the more to be remarked, as many of them are rude, lowly, and time-stricken structures. The white-washed fences and walls look cleanly and carefully kept; the honey-suckle and jessamine, clustering roses and graceful laburnums, with their thick blossoms overhanging and festooning the doors and windows with sweet drapery, add a charm, so rare with us, but strongly reminding one of the cottage homes of England.

With an attention all alive to the beautiful, you drive into Dover, whose tall spires, pointing like needles to the sky, afford a promise which is not disappointed. The fine hotels; the chaste architecture of many of the buildings; the noble manufactories; and especially the neat and imposing churches; all conspire to make Dover one of the most beautiful towns in New Hampshire. And then its glorious prospects! —most glorious of all from Mount Pleasant! That is indeed a spot of rare and unsurpassed beauty. There lies before you the village, sleeping in its sweet valley, surrounded by hills the most romantic, of every form and position, up the sides of which grow the ivy and laurel, with thick hemlocks waving their banners of dark and luxuriant foliage from the very top. Below you winds the home-loving Cochecho, as if loath to leave the bright valley of its meandering, and through the trees you catch glimpses of the blue sky, vieing in its far-off beauty and clear depths with the far-famed sky of Italy. We lingered on the hill until day faded, rejoicing in one of the finest sunsets I ever beheld, and then returned to our inn.

After supper, tempted by the soft airs of the evening, we strolled about the town. All seemed as busy and bustling as it had been during the day. The shops were brilliantly lighted, and thronged with crowds of girls just released from the spinning-jennies and looms of the factories. Knots of politicians were assembled in different points and corners of the streets, discussing

the news of just terminated elections. Jaunty beaux sauntered idly along, in their straw hats and white jackets, and auctioneers clamored at their sales, and emitted a world of noisy commendation of their respective wares. It was the noon-time of a manufacturing town. Nobody dreamed of home, or thought of sleep, so long as buyers could be tempted, or bargains made. One poor Italian music-stroller, with his organ box before him, labored hardest and longest, with the poorest success. Before shop and tavern, office, and dwelling-house, did he grind at the mill of music, and for the pittance of a few pence, march off contented and cheerful, followed by a crowd of noisy boys.

The following morning, after an early breakfast, we resumed our journey. Passing through Great Falls, a flourishing manufacturing village, we drove for several miles through flat sand-barrens, covered with the Norway pine. A few half-starved sheep and cows were grazing on the scanty herbage. Here and there a slab house was to be seen, with its turf chimney and solitary windows, the broken panes patched with old hats and petticoats; and near by, a half acre of ground, enclosed for potatoes. Beyond Rochester, however, the barrens disappear and the road assumes the mountainous and rugged features of New Hampshire. There is no country where the advantages of persevering industry are more conspicuous than here. In passing over the mountainous parts, the traveller is struck with admiration, as he observes rocks, naturally barren,

abounding with rich pastures, and marks the traces of the plough along the sides of steep precipices. The inhabitants seem to have surmounted every obstruction which soil, situation, and climate have thrown in their way, and to have spread fertility over various spots of their State, consigned by nature to everlasting barrenness.

The population of New Hampshire falls somewhat short of three hundred thousand inhabitants; and a more persevering, thrifty, intelligent, and moral community; a more brave, hardy, industrious people, remarkable for their fidelity, and their zealous attachment to the liberties of their country, is not to be found in the world. There is a pristine simplicity of manners, an open and unaffected frankness, and an invincible spirit of freedom, which I have never found in any other State in the Union. It is remarkable that the countries the least fertile are the most beloved by their inhabitants. An Italian or a Spaniard may be contented in exile, but a Swiss peasant, or a New Hampshire farmer, never; and although the young men often leave the State after they arrive at their majority, yet when they have acquired a competence, neither the luxuries of the cities, nor the rich prairies of the West, can content them, while away from their sublime but unproductive mountains.

Some thirty miles north of Dover, between Wakefield and Wolfborough, the road passes by the old farm of Governor Wentworth, the last of the colonial

governors of New Hampshire. It was here, in the midst of what was then an almost unbroken forest, on the banks of a lovely lake, whose sides ascend gradually to the base of the high mountains around, that a gay and polished courtier of England established his residence. Clearing enough around the lake to open its beauties, he erected a magnificent dwelling, in one of the loveliest spots in New England. Roads were made, fences were built, trees were transplanted, flowers and foreign shrubs were introduced; and the solitary place became indeed a garden. It was here that of old the haunch smoked and the flagon foamed. It was here, in the inclement season, that the wayfarer took his place at the festive board, a welcome, though uninvited guest. Here, while the storm howled without, the faggot blazed on the capacious hearth, and reflected back the light of smiling faces, while the jest and the song went round, and the old hall rang to the roof-tree. The old man was a rigid observer of the customs of the church; and the inhabitants of the town will still tell you of the traditionary tales of Christmas holidays at the hall. For the twelve merry days, the roast beef and the turkey smoked on the board, and no cold refusal was given, even to the beggar at the door, who might ask for alms. Those were Christmas days of the olden time, wearing their livery of goodly green, and lacking not the holly garland, with its glowing berries; when the oft-told tale cheered the face, and hospitality brightened the heart, of the toiling poor.

The first alarm of the revolt of the colonists came in the midst of the Governor's improvements; and the outbreaks in Massachusetts decided him to flee to a safer refuge. He left his paradise, never to return to it; and at the conclusion of the war it was confiscated and sold. Though the house is now burned to the ground, yet many of the improvements in the fields and gardens still remain; and as we wandered around the delightful lake, we fancied we could almost hear the loud sounds of mirth resounding from the high-bred ladies and gentlemen of England, who resorted here in the days of its grandeur.

The aged people in the neighborhood still relate many stories of the worthy old Governor. He had, it seems, married a very pretty little girl, some thirty years his junior, who, like most young wives, was fond of gaiety, and liked better to pass the evening in strolling through the woods by moonlight, or dancing at some merry-making, than in the arms of her gray-haired husband. Nevertheless, though she kept late hours, she was in every other respect an exemplary wife. The Governor, who was a quiet, sober personage, and careful of his health, preferred going to bed early, and rising before the sun, to inhale the cool breezes of the morning; and as the lady seldom came home till past midnight, he was not very well pleased at being disturbed by her late hours. At length, after repeated expostulations, his patience was completely exhausted, and he frankly told her that he could endure

it no longer ; and that if she did not return home in future before twelve o'clock, she should not be admitted to the house.

The lady laughed at her spouse, as pretty ladies are wont to do in such cases ; and on the very next occasion of a merry-making, she did not return till half-past two in the morning. The Governor heard the carriage drive to the door, and the ponderous knocker clang for admittance ; but he did not stir. The lady then bade her servant try the windows ; but this the Governor had foreseen ; they were all secured. Determined not to be out-generalled, she alighted from the carriage, and drawing a heavy key from her pocket, sent it ringing through the windows into the very chamber of her good man. This answered the purpose. Presently a night-capped head peered from the windows, and demanded the cause of the disturbance. "Let me into the house, sir !" sharply replied the wife. The Governor was immoveable, and very ungallantly declared she should remain without all night. The fair culprit coaxed, intreated, expostulated, and threatened ; but it was all in vain. At length, becoming frantic at his imperturbable obstinacy, she declared that unless she were admitted at once, she would throw herself into the lake, and he might console himself with the reflection, that he was the cause of her death. The governor begged she would do so, if it would afford her any pleasure ; and shutting the window, he retired again to bed.

The lady now instructed her servants to run swiftly to the water, as if in pursuit of her, and to throw a large stone over the bank, screaming as if in terror, at the moment of doing it, while she would remain concealed behind the door. The good governor, notwithstanding all his decision and nonchalance, was not quite at ease when he heard his wife express her determination. Listening, therefore, very attentively, he heard the rush to the water side—the expostulation of the servants—the plunge, and the screams; and knowing his wife to be very rash, in her moments of vexation, and really loving her most tenderly, he no longer doubted the reality. “Good God! is it possible!” said he; and springing from his bed, he ran to the door, with nothing about him save his robe de nuit, and crying out, “Save her, you rascals! leap in, and save your mistress!” made for the lake. In the mean time his wife hastened in-doors, locked and made all fast, and shortly afterward appeared at the window, from which her husband had addressed her. The Governor discovered the *ruse*, but it was too late; and he became, in his turn, the expostulator. It was all in vain, however; the fair lady bade him a pleasant good night, and shutting the window, retired to bed, leaving the little man to shift for himself, as best he might, until morning. Whether the governor forgave his fair lady, tradition does not say: but it is reasonable to presume that he never again interfered with the hours she might choose to keep.

An hour's ride from the Governor's farm brings you to the village of Wolfborough. The intervening country is exceedingly beautiful, and the location of the road, the beautiful points of prospect over which it is made to pass, the variety of woodland and meadow, mountains and lake, brawling brook and leaping cascade, render it a beautiful drive, and speak in high terms of the Governor's correct and cultivated taste. For two or three miles after leaving the farm, you wind around the lake, the borders of which now stretch out into long beaches of the whitest sand, and again are fringed with thick groves of the small white birch. Glimpses of the farm are continually caught as you drive slowly along, and in the days of its glory, when the fine old house reared itself aloft like a palace, and its summer bowers and trellised gardens, spread out all about it, the ride around the pond must have been one of exceeding beauty.

The village of Wolfborough is prettily situated on an arm of the lake, and does a snug little business in the way of navigation. It has a church, an academy, a bank, a tavern, a blacksmith's shop, two or three stores, and a bridge. I learned little about it, and saw little of any interest. From the top of the hill, however, over which you pass in your northward progress, a fine view is afforded of Lake Winnepiseoga. The prospect far north pleased me still more, when the wooded tops of the Ossipee Hills, and the scarlet sides of Red Mountain, filled up the whole horizon north and west. The

appearance of the Ossipee Hills is peculiar for New Hampshire mountains. Although formed of the primitive rocks, which usually present abrupt surfaces, sharp cornered angles, rough sides, and sudden precipices, these Hills are round, smooth, and capable of cultivation all over the sides, to the very summits. True they are covered with huge granite boulders, scattered all along their gently descending slopes, and far down upon the valleys below, but still no traces of the body rock are observable above the surface, along the whole distance, and wherever clearings have been made in the dense forest, the richest green herbage covers the pastures, which are filled with thousands of cattle.

These immense interminable forests must eventually become a source of unbounded wealth to the State. With proper care and economy they would supply a population as large as the United States contain, with fire wood and lumber for a thousand years. For the northern states a resort to this must eventually be had. With no possibility of coal beds occurring nearer than those of Pennsylvania—with a constantly increasing population, and equally increasing demand for timber—and more than all with no economy of what is possessed in the present, and no foresight of what will be needed in the future, the attention of capitalists must eventually be turned to the White Mountain forests. The means of transportation would be by no means difficult. The Ossipee Mountains, along the whole distance of ten miles, run down to within three miles

of the lake. The outlet of the lake is but thirteen miles from the sea board, and the whole distance favorable to the construction of a canal. That one will eventually be built, and that these vast forests, now useless, will be transported to other parts of the country, bringing to New Hampshire a source of uncounted revenue, is without a doubt.

The town of Tuftonborough, through which we drove, has nearly fallen into decay. Ancient houses; ruined tenements, black and battered with the storms of fifty winters; huge mansions, exhibiting the English architectural style of the seventeenth century; half buried remains of forts and block-houses, built for the protection of the inhabitants against the hostile incursions of the Indians; and antique chairs, tables, bedsteads, bureaux, and a variety of other chattels of a former age, daily exposed for sale in the windows of the shops, or on the counter of the auctioneer—give to it an aspect of antiquity, very rarely met with in any part of our country. The people too seem to partake of the character of the place. There are more old ladies who peer over their spectacles as you drive through the long dilapidated street; more old gentlemen who stand leaning on their canes, “chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies,” than I ever saw any where else. If the reader is tired of the hurry and bustle of this ever-a-building world, let me whisper to him, that there is rare stillness and quiet, among the dilapidated tenements and superannuated people of Tuftonborough.

It was a blustering and dreary day as we continued our journey toward Moultonborough. Dark clouds were sweeping over our heads and drifting in huge banks against the mountain sides. The high peaks were entirely enveloped in thick mist, and every thing in the landscape looked cheerless enough. One long line of light however lay near the foot of the mountain, tinging it of the brightest red, and giving us a faint pledge of a pleasant evening, and a fair day for the Sabbath. Nor were we disappointed. Before evening the clouds passed off, the sky became clear, the mists rolled in white fleeces up the mountain side, and the sun went down clear and beautiful into the bosom of the lake.

OSSIPEE FALLS.

I begin shrewdly to suspect the young man of a terrible taint—Poetry; with which idle disease, if he be infected, there's no hope of him in a state course.—
BEN JOHNSON.

No one who has ever lived or travelled at the north, can forget a New England village. In many respects it is unlike every other place where human beings congregate. Its broad streets; its gravelled side-walks; its neat white houses, with their green venetians and pretty porticos; its fine old elms at the corners, and shrubbery in the court-yards, and rich meadows all about it; make it worthy of the fame it has acquired, the world over. Take the pleasantest country town elsewhere, and it lacks something of coming up to the standard of a New England village. There may be more elegance and more wealth in many a hamlet at the South, and the Middle States boast numbers of towns of great taste and beauty; yet there is wanting that air of neatness, and that true independence of manhood, which the mountain breezes give to the population of her valleys, which associates with a New England village all that we love in nature, with all that we admire in humanity.

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But of all other villages in New England, those which lie on the shores of Winnepiseoga Lake, are to me by far the most beautiful. Massachusetts boasts of her Northampton, her Worcester, and her Stockbridge—the last deriving not a little of its celebrity from being the residence of one of the cleverest women in the states—and they are all very lovely; yet they lack that wonderful adornment which nature has bestowed, that rare union of the extremes of grandeur and beauty, which makes up the enchantment of the villages on the lake. What, for example, can be prettier than the views of Centre-Harbor, from the west or north? As the traveller comes over the hills, and the broad valley lies spread out before him, with the village sleeping quietly in its bosom, he will involuntarily rein in his horse, that he may the longer gaze on what is so very, very lovely! Far away to the east, the long range of the Ossipee mountains confines his vision to a prospect as fair as that which the Jewish ruler saw of old from Mount Nebo. The whole valley of the Winnepiseoga, with its rich farms, and broad lake, and gay diversity of hill and dale, swells and ripens to his view, and the green copses here and there dotting the whole surface, add a charm to the picture, of which no gazer ever yet tired. The river winds its course along to the lake, now expanding itself into a broad sheet, to supply the ever-busy wheel of the manufactory, and then narrowing to its own modest size, and flashing back the glad sunshine from its ripples, as it glides softly through

meadows and hazle-wood. The hard beaten road runs like a white line over the landscape, at times winding past neat farm-houses and spacious barns, and at others lost for a space in the dark woods of beech and maple, which cast their unchanging shadows over the way.

And then the Lake-house, standing at the head of the beautiful bay, whose ripples almost lave its foundations; dear to me from the associations of white arms and jet-black eyes, flashing through their long dark fringes, which my college days have clustered about them; the long wharf and its mimic ships; the light sail-boat bending gracefully to the wind; the old trees on the shore, and the foot-paths winding among the close, thick under-brush of the forest—all together make up to my eye the most beautiful panorama I have ever beheld.

I well remember that one pleasant October morning, sundry of us, who were making a temporary residence at Centre Harbor, set out to visit the Falls on the Ossipee mountain. After driving some eight or ten miles to the foot of the mountain, we left our horses and vehicles, and made the ascent on foot. The path led along the top of high banks, and precipices edging a ravine, through which a stream, by a gradually descending and winding course, tumbled and foamed over its rocky bed toward the valley below. I never remember to have more enjoyed the freshness of the air, the beauty of the grass and flowers, the twittering of the birds, the whirring, ever and anon, of some pheasant

scared from its haunt, and the various other sources of delight, both to the ear and the eye.

Before reaching the Falls, we diverged from the stream, with the intention of taking a shorter route over the mountain to the fountain head, which we were told was well worth seeing, and then following its course downward. After half an hour's walk over every variety of surface, rock, morass, and jungle, we reached the spot, and found ourselves well compensated for our labor. It is a large, circular spring, ten or twelve yards across, from the clear sanded bottom of which the water was gushing out in a thousand places. Just beyond the outlet, the stream was playing in every variety of motion; now almost placid, running off into meandering rivulets, then shooting with rapidity over large smooth masses, bearing on its rich, transparent bosom, white bubbles, like fairy barks in a race. All this was seen under the green light of overhanging foliage, waving only to give entrance to the partial sunbeams, that passed and repassed, like unembodied spirits of light, in their pastime and gladness. It was so gentle and peaceful, that the very birds seemed to bid you doff ambition, and enter the haunts of innocence and tranquil wisdom!

Crossing bridges formed of decayed logs, the path winds downward by the bank, close to the water, until a precipitous rock denies further progress over the ledges of which the stream descends. It is then shut in during its whole course onward to the cascade, by

high banks, forty, sixty, and even an hundred feet high, and generally perpendicular. It is here, where the distance between the banks is fifteen or eighteen feet, that Chamberlain made his famous leap, when pursued by the Indians ; Chamberlain, so well known for his fearless exploits during Lovell's war. Tradition adds, that one Indian, in attempting to follow, failed to reach the opposite bank, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks below.

The scenery at the Falls is strikingly beautiful and unique. The hills all around rough and rocky, with their recesses slightly wooded, rise bright into the blue sky, and are admirably set off by the foliage of the trees that start out from the declivities of the ravine. The stream glides smoothly over its bed, here and there edging the fragments of stone, that impede its motion, to the very brink of the chasm, when it projects itself in one unbroken leap of ninety feet into the basin below ! The basin is a perfect circle, of twenty yards in diameter, completely walled in, save at a single outlet, by precipices of moss-covered rocks, nearly a hundred and fifty feet high. As you stand on its border with the dark and damp rocks rising perpendicularly above you, watching the silvery mass pouring itself, as it were, from the blue bosom of the sky into the depths below, the scene is irresistibly charming. It gave to me an unmingled pleasure, which I have never since received from any of nature's works, and which I can never cease to remember.

We lingered around the Falls until nearly sunset, exploring every cavity to which we could find an entrance, above or below, when our guide summoned us to depart. On our way home we took a different path, and winding, for a time, through the thick underwood and over the decayed logs and upturned roots of a former age, came at length to a rugged promontory, which was like a spur from the mountain range to the lake. Before us lay the whole expanse of the lake, calm as a surface of glass, and reflecting the western clouds so clearly from its bosom, that its hundreds of islands seemed hung in mid air. On the opposite side, the mountain outlines were marked distinctly on the sky, and their tops were glowing in the rich light of an October sunset. Below us, the stream was winding its way toward the lake, through meadows and intervals, and dark copses of fir, while the whole landscape was suffused in the most harmonious and beautiful colors. More beautiful than all else, however, let me add, were bright eyes gazing beside my own, and a soft voice whispering magic words.

That day has long since gone,—a day of poetry, which, like the small pox, every man must have once in the course of his life. That I had it lightly, the following lines, sent the next morning to my fair companion, will fully testify :—

A streamlet came down from the brow of a hill,
All dancing in mirth at the test of its skill,
Like a dream were its ripples, like a dream it sped on,
And away to the far lake in haste it has gone.

It flowed in its mirth by a soft, grassy bank,
And the glad sounds of childhood it joyfully drank,
The whispers of lovers, when no ear was nigh,
And the tear as it fell from the bright maiden's eye.

The in-running brooks told it many a tale
Of secrets they heard, by the green-wood and dale,—
And oft as it stole by the mountain's dark brow,
There were dread scenes of horror it never might show.

The warm sunshine cheered it throughout the long day,
The breezes they fanned it, to see the waves play,—
And in the calm midnight, though never so far,
It mirror'd the beams of full moon and star.

It passed on its way by a low, lonely tomb,
Where flowers were shedding their richest perfume,—
It heard in the evening in bye-path and lane,
That sweetest of songs, the nightingale's strain.

But the sights which it saw, and the tales which it heard,
The whispers of starlight, the song of the bird,
The kiss of the flower, the dance of the wave,—
It sped with them all to their watery grave.

Thus life, my fair cousin, is but the swift stream—
Its spring-tide, and summer, and autumn, a dream;
Its bright hues of gladness, its dark hours of woe,
To that ocean before us all rapidly go.

THE NOTCH.

An iron race the mountain cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain.—GRAY.

THIRTY miles north of Lake Winnepiseoga—a wretched misnomer, by the way, of the old Indian Winnepeissaukee—is the nice little village of Conway. From here the views of the White Hills are exceedingly grand, their huge bodies embracing the whole horizon from the west around to the northeast, and their tops wreathed in clouds and snow. As you advance north, they fill up more of the space on every side, until at last you find yourself completely begirt with them, their rough sides hemming you in every where. As you approach them, population becomes more sparse, the land more rough and sterile, and every thing begins to assume an appearance of unformed, chaotic matter. We went on our way very cheerfully, over glade, and brook, and dingle, now threading the thickening forest, and now slowly passing the frail and tremulous bridges. “Speak well of the bridge that carries you safe over,” says the adage, and I am sure that I never felt so much disposition to do a series of bridges justice; for while they always discharged their duty,

they always left one wondering how they were able to do it. Here and there a log-house appeared in the midst of a clearing, its wood chimney, and mud-plastered sides, and windowless holes, looking cheerless enough. Generally speaking, there is too little neatness around log-houses to give the picturesque cottage air, so attractive to the traveller; and the squalid children crowding out of the door to gaze at the passer-by, or rolling with the pigs in the mud and sand, make the tout ensemble of a new settler's habitation very repulsive.

The valley, which is traversed by all travellers visiting the White Hills, is intersected by the Saco river. A most delicious valley it is, shut in all around by mountains, fertile in the greenest grasses, and the loftiest trees, and most lovely, because it is the only level spot the eye rests upon in its reach over the huge elevations around. In the midst of this valley is the house of the elder Crawford. His sons, whom we shall have occasion to mention hereafter, all of them mountain men, descendants, in height and strength of limb, from Anak, live farther on. They pass a strange life of it, these Crawfords—three months in the year receiving and entertaining visitors from all parts of the world, and the other nine living in utter solitude. Still they are well content with their lot; hale, hearty, jovial fellows, all; ready to oblige the visitors to the hills in every possible way, and intimately associated in the traveller's mind with the curiosities of the place. It is here that you

begin first to take in the greatness of these mountains. All around you, overtopping each other, they rise, and their immense size contrasts strangely with the house, the trees, everything indeed near you. Your ideas are enlarged by taking in objects so much greater than you have ever seen before; and for a time there is a painful sensation in bringing the mind up to all this greatness and grandeur. As you get accustomed to them, the gratification is increased; and you are never tired of looking at the variety of prospects presented to you as you pass along. Now there is the deep and scarred indentation which the avalanche has left; then the dense, dark forest, into which no intruder has ever been, and on the trees of which no axe has ever fallen. Here is the deep precipice, and over it leaps the silvery streamlet; while there is some narrow and winding pathway, past rock, and moor, and hillock. Sometimes you find the solid body rock torn all in fragments, and the huge boulders scattered in thick profusion over the ground, making whole miles the very "abomination of desolation." Farther on, the dwarf-oak and the clustered hazles cover acres of ground, contrasting strangely with the high towering forests around. The summits of the mountains are generally bare of all vegetation, and, except for one summer month, are covered with snow. The hot days of the last of July and the first of August usually melt away most of the old snow, although many of the crevices hold it, unmelted, from year to year, while the first of September, and of-

tentimes before that, the morning breaks upon the snow covered tops.

The younger Crawford, who has been the guide up the hills for many years, tells a great many laughable stories of the pertinacity of travellers in making the ascent, after the season has passed. He gives his advice only as to the practicability of ascending, or the probability of a clear sky from the top, leaving the traveller to decide as to whether he will attempt it. A South Carolinian came here a few years since, on the last of September, which is a month later than the ascent is ever made. Mr. Crawford gave him his advice; told him of the difficulties of ascent so late in the year; and urged him against it. All would not do. He had travelled hundreds of miles to stand on the highest land in the States, and he was not to be diverted from his purpose. He was accordingly furnished with horses, provisions, blankets, and all necessary comforts, and by early light, on the first clear morning, he set off with his guide on the perilous undertaking. After reaching the foot of the hill, they dismounted, secured their horses, and commenced the ascent. Before half of the labor had been accomplished, the clouds covered the heavens, and a thick fall of snow set in upon them. Still our traveller was undismayed, and encouraged and urged forward his guide. The snow fell so fast that the difficulty of moving onward increased every moment; and worse than all, the usual landmarks were buried from sight, so that the guide

declared he was uncertain of the way. The stranger, however, was resolute; and through snows mid-leg deep, and the howling of a furious storm, he urged on the fainting courage of his guide. Late at night the top of the mountain was reached, through difficulties that none but those who have been to the top of Mount Washington can imagine. When the guide proclaimed that the point had been gained, and that they stood on the very top, our traveller doubted, fearing that the guide, finding all persuasions to return fruitless, had determined to deceive him. "Is this positively the top of the hill?" "Yes, sir, positively." "Will you swear to it?" "Yes, sir." "Hold up your right hand." The guide held it up. "You solemnly swear, that, to your knowledge, this place on which we stand is commonly called the top of Mount Washington, and is the spot to which you conduct all travellers who come to ascend the mountain. So help you God!" The guide took the oath, and added, "This, sir, is the pile of stones which the travellers, who come up here, have heaped up." The gentleman put his hand upon the pile, and exclaimed, "I am satisfied; now let us return." The descent was accomplished with great difficulty, and at imminent peril, for the snow had so covered the path that it could not be seen at all, and it was not until noon of the next day that they arrived safely back at Crawford's.

We reached the Notch just after noon. The entrance of the chasm is formed by two rocks standing perpen-

dicularly at the distance of twenty-two feet from each other; one about twenty, the other twelve feet in height. This opens you into a narrow defile, extending two miles in length, between two huge cliffs, apparently rent asunder by some great convulsion of nature. This convulsion, Dr. Dwight thinks, was that of the deluge, since there are no proofs of volcanic action any where in this region. Half the space is occupied by the Saco river, and the other half by the road. As you proceed in this pass, the huge mountains of bare cliffs and rocks tower above you on either side, and the view behind you is completely shut in, while that before opens upon bluffs and precipices of granite. Trees spring out from the rough projections, and wrench themselves from the narrow crevices, giving an air of caprice to the scene. The river winds along, bubbling over a rocky bed in some places, running in a deep channel in others, turning this moment round in its mimic whirlpool, and the next starting rapidly off in its deep-worn channel. And then the cascades, up to the very skies, leaping in white foam down precipice after precipice, looking like some pure white riband floating in the air! How the waters sparkle in the sunshine, and tremble in the breeze, and bend downward a thousand ways in their rapid course! The fine basin of solid rock, too, in which they lie, so still, and pure, and cool;

“ A place itself so sweet and lonely,
Seems fit for lovers, and lovers only.”

The deep, dark forest is in keeping with the whole ; its low, sea-like music lulling your whole spirit into symphony with the beauty and grandeur of rock, water, and scur. More than half way through the valley stands the house occupied by the Wileys, the unfortunate family who were buried in an avalanche of the mountains in 1824. The story is a sad one, and every one who remembers the interest with which the tale was listened to, after the event happened, visits the place with melancholy associations.

After you emerge from the Notch, the mountains begin speedily to open with increased majesty, and often rise to a perpendicular height little less than a mile. The bosom of both ranges on each side of you is overspread by a mixture of evergreens with the large forest trees. The conical firs and spruces cover the tops of the smaller hills, and give an eastern air to the scenery. Farther up, vegetation seems stunted, and a forest of trees, scarce higher than one's head, shows the region of sterility and cold. Farther still, the smooth grey rocks, or the scanty earth, enveloped in a shroud of dark-colored moss, point out the region of perpetual winter.

A few hours' ride from the Notch brings one to the house of Ethan A. Crawford, par eminence the Man of the Hills. No person who has visited the White Hills, will ever forget the good nature, directness, honesty, and mirthfulness, of mine host of the mountains. In personal appearance, he is a most imposing man,

standing six feet seven inches in his stockings, and exceedingly stout and well-proportioned. As a runner and wrestler, he is well known at all the village gatherings, while in leaping he would easily outdo the famous juvenile feat of old Christopher North; nor would he fear to encounter "the flying tailor o' Et-trick, auld Hispin Hurcheon, who at hap-stap and loup, bate Christopher a' till sticks." He is very strong, too, having oftentimes carried a lady in his arms half-way up Mount Washington. Imagine such a man, with a rough, brown face, well tanned by exposure to sun and wind, but smiling benevolence upon you, putting on a fur hat, over which brush has never been drawn, with a coarse home-spun coat and pantaloons, a shirt-collar open at the neck, and stout cow-hide shoes, and you have a glimpse of our host and friend, Ethan A. Crawford. Go up to him and ask him whatever question you please, so it be but civilly put, and mark the good nature streaming out from his eyes as he answers you. Request from him a favor to yourself or your friends, and see how readily and cheerfully he moves to do it. Follow up your questions and demands; ask things which you know he cannot obtain for you without great inconvenience to himself or household; nay more, worry his dogs, over-ride his horses, leave open his garden gate, dirty his parlor, and he is still the same imperturbably good-natured Ethan A. Crawford.

The family are of Scotch descent, and have lived

for three generations among the mountains. I was told the following anecdote some years ago, respecting the manner in which the property now belonging to the Crawfords was obtained from old Governor Wentworth.

The governor, who was fond of seeing human nature under every form, and in the absence of all ceremony and constraint—a taste which the dignity of his station prevented from being gratified at his own house—was in the habit, while he resided at Wolf borough, of making excursions, without ceremony, and often unattended, into the various parts of the State. In one of these tours, he came upon the new log-house of the Scotch squatter, and finding the good man away at his work, he endeavored to render himself very agreeable to the buxom wife at home. Ignorant of the high station of her guest, the lady stoutly opposed his proffered gallantries, and on the return of her husband from the woods, complained to him of the incivility of the stranger. Crawford, who, like his descendant of this day, was a man of great good nature, rather fancying the appearance of the governor, and tired of his long solitude among the mountains, passed off the complaint as a good joke upon an old man, and invited him to stay all night. The governor assented, and Crawford, adjusting his out-of-door's work, returned to the house, his tongue loaded with inquiries, and his heart full of glee. The governor was pleasant and facetious; the host became free-hearted and jovial;—till at last, with

a friendly and most familiar salutation betwixt the guest's shoulders, and a hearty and protracted shake of the hand, the gude-man declared he was the "best fellow he had met wi' sin the days o' the bailie o' Glasgow, who was aye fou' six days out o' the seven, and ended his life at last ae drifty night amang the snaw."

As the night passed away, the ale flowed more freely, and the song resounded from the old rafters; the governor's wit enraptured the host, and the lady even, overcoming her first dislike, grew gracious to so merry-hearted a guest. Early in the morning the stranger departed; not, however, without insisting upon a visit from his kind-hearted and hospitable landlord, at his house in Wolfborough, where, under the name of "old Wentworth," he was, as he alleged, sufficiently well known. The visit in the course of time was paid, and the attendants, being apprised of the jest, had Crawford introduced, very much to his surprise and confusion, into the governor's presence. Here he was banqueted and feasted for some days, in a most princely manner, and dismissed at last with a deed of a thousand acres of the land where he had settled.

The evening view of the scenery from Crawford's house was exceedingly fine. The afternoon had threatened rain, but as night came on, the last lingerer among the dark clouds moved off, leaving only those high masses of white vapour, which among the mountains are the surest indications of fair weather. The

pale moon rode high among them, pillowed as they were upon the deep blue of the sky, forming towers, and palaces, and islets, so changeful and fleeting that they seemed like the creations of fairy land. Some lofty pine trees near the house, in the greenness of their new foliage, sighed gently in the soft breeze that had sprung up in the west, and the uneven, dark outline of the mountains loomed out in the faint moonlight, with a mysterious depth of shadow, well suited to the solemnity and stillness of the hour. Wearied with the journey and the intense excitement we had felt all the day, our party bade each other good night, and retired to rest, assured by our host that the morning would bring us a bright sky for our projected ascent of Mount Washington.

MOUNT WASHINGTON.

"Who first beholds those everlasting clouds,
Seed time and harvest, morning, noon, and night,
Still where they were, steadfast, immovable;
Those mighty hills, so shadowy, so sublime,
As rather to belong to heaven than earth—
But instantly receives into his soul
A sense, a feeling that he loses not,
A something that informs him 'tis an hour,
Whence he may date, henceforward and forever.
To me they seem the barriers of a world,
Saying, thus far no farther."

THE morning dawn was just stealing over the mountains, when the hoarse voice, and loud rapping of our friend Crawford upon the door, roused us from a delicious sleep. My first look was out of the window to discover if it was a fair day, and I had no sooner cast a single glance abroad over the landscape, than I called upon my companions to enjoy the magnificent scene with me. The veil of morning twilight was spread over the myriad-sided mountains, in the very midst of which we were, and an indistinctness of vision, as your gaze wandered slowly over their bases, gave them a hugeness, which they had not the day before.

The bald tops were red in the first rays of morning,


and stood in a strange, bold relief against the sky. Behind them long strata of clouds were tinged with gorgeous coloring, growing deeper every moment, and tints of purple and gold touched the fleecy mists, that lay in several places on the outlines and cliffs of the mountains. In the higher heavens not a cloud was to be seen, the darkness was rapidly giving place to the deep blue; and the morning star glimmered faintly directly above the sharp summit of Mount Monroe.

We had hardly enjoyed this scene for a minute, when the voice of our good-natured host again hastened us to our toilets, and very soon, equipped in the gear we had been furnished with over night, not the least important part of which was the stout cow-hide boots, selected from the mountaineer's wardrobe, we came down to breakfast. In personal graces my landlady was no mean counterpart of her gigantic husband, and in kind feeling, practical sense, and cheerful readiness, fully his equal. Her breakfast-table was spread with everything which mountains could be expected to provide, and although we were by no means inclined to the more substantial dishes before us, yet the exhortations of the guide who presided at the repast, backed by our own anticipations of the difficulties we should have to encounter, induced us to do full justice to the smoking and savory viands.

By six o'clock we were all mounted on horseback, and ready for a start. Tom, our guide, a long bony individual, whose appearance perpetually reminded me

of Aristotle's definition of man ;—who was as grave as he was bony, and far prosier than he was long,—took the lead ; bestriding an unkempt, gnarled pony of the Canada breed, which he managed, greatly to my marvel, without halter or bridle. Two gentlemen, whom we had casually met at Crawford's, bent on the same purpose with ourselves, followed the guide, riding abreast when the nature of the ground permitted, and falling into single file over the more difficult and narrow parts of the way. My companion and myself made the next platoon, he riding a brown, sturdy mare, whose trot was so long and high, that he rose and fell at each step, like the prices current of Bank Stock in a panic, and I, mounted on a spavined gelding, whose paces would have puzzled the calculation of the shrewdest horse-dealer in Christendom. In the rear came our friend Crawford, with saddlebags of provisions flapping on each side of his stout plough-horse, a bundle of greatcoats and overalls bound behind his saddle, and a knapsack of sundry utensils strapped upon his back.

It was with shouts and peals of laughter, making the whole forest ring, that we rode on in our straggling line. The morning was bright and sunny, and the atmosphere so pure and transparent, that it seemed to bathe the very heart in gladness. Our march was for a little distance along the road, when we turned off into a rough pasture-lot, and then plunged into the forest. There was no possibility after this of proceeding faster



than a walk. Sometimes we had to break our way through low marshes, matted with redundant vegetation, where the thick alders and hazles crowded across the path, and linking with the opposite shrubbery, formed an almost impassible barrier; sometimes we coasted along the rapid brooks, spreading over a deep, rocky bottom, whose sides showed the fury of the stream when sudden rains raised its waters, and whose gleaming pools, linked together by long lines of falls, embedded like mirrors in the giant bosom of the forest, reflected the green foliage, and the bright blueness of the sky. Sometimes we rode up steep acclivities, where the smooth ledge scarcely afforded a footing for the horses, but whose heights began to afford us a foretaste of the magnificent scenery we were about to witness.

Our ride extended six miles only in the forest, where we all dismounted, and fastening our horses under a rude shed, erected for the purpose by Crawford, pursued our ascent on foot. It was a steep and zigzag way, through a forest of majestic trees, that surrounds the mountain like a belt, running along by the edge of a dark and tremendous ravine, the sides of which are composed of perpendicular rocks, hundreds of feet high, at the bottom of which ran a torrent far out of our view, and known only by its distant and hollow murmurs. The narrow path often wound along the very brink of the precipice on our left, yet the eye could not penetrate to the depth of the abyss. After more than an

hour of toilsome climbing, we emerged from the wood and found ourselves in one of the most picturesque and romantic spots that could well be imagined.

Just below us ran the gleaming river, sparkling along its bed of white pebbles; a wilderness, untouched, untrodden, spread over the valleys and up the hill sides; and away, near and afar off, the ranges of mountains towered as if over our heads, or purpled in the distance. The summit of old Washington was clear, and the snows on it shown and sparkled like molten silver. Beside us, were sheer precipices, clothed with dwarf oak and spruce, and a torrent rumbled and roared and rushed along the bottom of the gulf.

Everywhere around, rose masses of rocks, and sharp ledges, and from patch and crevice sprang forest trees and shrubs, their gnarled and knotted roots encircling the rocks like a net. Sometimes a smooth plat of ground, sometimes a knoll, sometimes dense, tangled bushes were met with, while everywhere huge trees of hemlock and fir, and beech, towered above us. Here and there, a tree, that had been smitten by thunder, reared aloft its white and leafless branches, its shivered trunk looking like a mass of charcoal; while others, broken by the violence of the gales, lifted up their split and fractured trunks in a thousand shapes of resistance and of destruction, or still displayed some knotted or tortuous branches, stretched out in sturdy and fantastic forms of defiance to the whirlwind and the winter. Noble trunks, also, which had long resisted, but resisted

in vain, strewed the ground ; some lying on the declivity where they had fallen ; others still adhering to the precipice where they were rooted ; and many upturned with their twisted and tangled roots high in the air, astonishing us by the space which they covered, as they lay stretched on the ground.

As we ascended, two bald eagles soared over our heads, calling loudly to each other, as some game appeared in the distance. Just at this moment, a white swan came sailing along the air, her long neck stretched forward, and her wings flapping incessantly. A loud scream came from the eagles as she hove in sight, and they had evidently marked her for their prey. As she approached, one of them gliding through the air like a flash of lightning, darted upon her, and then as if deterred or disappointed, flew far out of sight. Our interest was all with the poor bird, who had been moving along so quietly on the air, and we were congratulating its escape by cheering words and loud huzzas, when the shrill shriek of the eagle came echoing again through the woods. Presently he emerged from behind a cliff, and sailed slowly beneath the swan, who mounted and doubled in fruitless efforts to escape his pursuer. Again with swift vengeance the eagle darted upon his prey, and fastening his talons in the struggling swan, forced him in a slanting direction into the recesses of the forest.

The eagle is very common about the mountainous regions, his true and favorite home. Mr. Crawford has

frequently found their nests, and sometimes taken their young, though the latter he considers a very hazardous feat, the old birds not hesitating to attack a man while their young are dependent upon their care. The nests are sometimes found on trees, sometimes in deep glens, sometimes on the higher acclivities of the rocks. They are composed of large sticks, thick pieces of turf, rushes, rank weeds, and moss, whenever that substance happens to be near. They often measure from five to six feet in diameter, and are frequently so great in the accumulation of materials, that they measure more than that in depth; receiving each year, in the great number in which they are occupied, increase of new material. While the young birds are small, the attachment of the parents is very great; but as they advance in size, and become able to fly, the old birds beat them off, and drive them away from their nests. They are strictly carnivorous, living entirely on fish, and flesh, and fowl, and often become great annoyances to the farmers, in carrying off poultry and lambs.

The eagle is the emblem of our country, but has certainly been chosen with bad taste. Franklin says in one of his letters, "I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country. He is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk, and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing

it to his nest for the support of his mate and young, the Bald Eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice, he is never in good case, but, like those among men, who live by sharpening and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little king-bird, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is, therefore, by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *king-birds* from our country."

In a little distance we again entered the forest, and clambering upward, now by the shelving rocks, that afforded a precarious footing, and anon, by gnarled roots, and intertwined branches, slowly wended our way towards the summit. The scene soon became still wilder. The trees, at first old and large, gradually grew stunted in size; one species after another dropped away; and the balsam fir and Norway pine, hardy and dwarfed, at last alone remained to us, surrounding us by a dark interminable wood, scarcely higher than our heads. Even these at length disappeared, and we found ourselves among the barren rocks, and eternal snows, of the upper regions.

Still onward we pursued our way, over small conical hills, ever rising above us, each promising to be the last; and along bare granite rocks, crusted with grey moss, but untouched and unscarred by the elements or time. Nothing can be imagined more desolate, than was the whole scene around. Not a tree, nor a flower,

nor a tuft of grass, infringed on that aspect of solitary vastness presented throughout. Vegetation in every form was absent ; fantastic figures of scattered boulders and riven rocks towered aloft, patches of snow crowned the elevations and laid deep in the ravines ; and the cone of old Washington, seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, towered above us, black as night, and excited unwonted sensations of awe and veneration.

In a few moments we were upon the summit. As we rose from the last depression in the mountain side, we entered a thick mist, cold as an autumn rain, and so insinuating, that, although closely wrapped in the heaviest winter garments, we were wetted to the skin. The guide immediately exclaimed, that the prospect was lost to us ; and so indeed it seemed, for the moment that we reached the summit, the wind was blowing so furiously that we could scarcely stand, and the thick mists sweeping rapidly by, prevented our seeing a rod around. The thermometer, which stood at 78 degrees at Crawford's, had fallen to 36 degrees ; and the sudden change so sensibly affected us, that, with shivering bodies and bitter lamentations, we were on the point of resuming at once our homeward march.

A few minutes, however, changed the whole scene. The mist, which had so completely enveloped us, was but a passing cloud over the top of the mountain ; and as it blew away, a view so full of interest opened upon us, that no description can do it justice. The huge Kremlin, piled up of eternal rocks, on which we stood,

in the midst of a metropolis of mountains, towered in its grandeur far above every object around. I had stood on Red Hill, and feasted my vision with the rich beauty of its bespangled lake and sequestered hamlets—I had reclined amid the spicy airs and woodland music of Mount Holyoke, and luxuriated in dreamy gaze on the green meadows, and thick foliage, and bending grain, which deck the beautiful line of the Connecticut, waving far over that landscape, where, as if on the soft bosom of a charmer, sleeps the “over-wearied giant”—I had crossed the Catskills—had seen the Shenandoah and Potomac, dashed through the narrow pass of the Blue Ridge—had listened to the roar of Niagara, and seen the white-crested rapids as they sped tumultuously forward to the brink of the fall—

“a hell of waters,”—

but they had each and all failed to fill my mind at once with such emotions of awe and greatness, as the scene which the opening clouds on the top of Mount Washington, spread out before me.

Every thing was on a scale of magnificence, of which I had formed no adequate conception. The height of the mountain, wrapped and shrouded by volumes of clouds far round its enormous sides, and on which the rays of the sun, refracted and reflected, painted a thousand colors; the myriads of mountains towards the south, reduced almost to the level of the valleys, from the superior height on which we stood, and seeming,

in their form and number, like mounds in the burial-place of a departed race; the long line of light far away to the East, which you know to be the ocean, now caught and now lost, as it mingled and blended with the horizon it touched; the range of cliffs on the west and north-west, weather-stained and lichened, over whose broad palisades giant shadows were stalking from clouds far down below our feet—gave to the mind such impressions of sovereign, majestic grandeur, as for a time excluded every other emotion.

It is not until the eye becomes somewhat familiarized to the scene, that its beauty is allowed to gain any ascendancy over the feelings. By degrees, however, it steals upon the heart, in such beautiful glimpses of some great mountain's breast; in the arrangement of such mighty masses into such harmonious order; in bare levels and bleak bents; in hundreds of fairy green-sward knolls, and scattered lakes, and gleaming rivers; that beauty alone, soul-filling, sovereign beauty, is transcendent. All around were glittering towns, scattered hamlets, secluded farm-houses, besides unnumbered mountains and untrodden forests. On the south horizon, led by the grand sierra of mountain peaks, the eye rests on the dazzling surface of Winnepissaukee, with her beautifully winding arms and studded islets. South—so far away that they grow dim on the horizon—rise the Horstach et Chocoma peaks, the Moose-hillock and Monadnoch; and nearer by the valley of

the Androscoggin, with its wide champaign of green-sward, pleases and refreshes the sight.

Looking northward, the mountains range on either side of a widening glen, terrific in their size, if you stand by their bases, but here, in the distance, beautiful in formation, and heaving upward like the walls of some vast temple, roofed by the sky. On their tops and sides, the light is red and clear, varying in a thousand shadows, but in the glens, deep below them, is more than twilight darkness, when light seems to dwell beside the day. The Notch, with its long white trace where the avalanche had passed, lay directly beneath our feet, and the silvery Saco appeared winding amidst an amphitheatre of mountains, with an empurpled back-ground, crested with the purest snow: among them was Mount Adams, towering proudly above the road we had traversed the day before, looking like a whitish line drawn along the valley.

But beautiful as the picture was, we could not long enjoy it, and after hastily partaking of the refreshments provided for us, we started at one hour past noon-day on our homeward return. On our way, an incident occurred, so startling to all our party at the time—but afterward the occasion of no little merriment—and so characteristic also of our host, that I cannot forbear relating it.

We had descended two thirds perhaps of the mountain, and were in the depth of the forest, when Crawford, who was in advance, sprung out of the path, and,

as it seemed to me, fell headlong over a fallen tree. As he said not a word, I started towards him, the others of the party being several rods behind us, supposing him to have fallen ; but what was my horror, to find him grappling a huge bear, who was tugging with all his strength to escape from the firm hold which Crawford's two hands had upon his hair. The contest lasted hardly long enough for me to cry " a bear, a bear," for Bruin, turning suddenly upon one side, threw his antagonist upon his back, and made off hastily to the woods.

The bear, it seems, was asleep behind the log, when Crawford, with his usual impetuosity and fearlessness, and without at all calculating upon the risks of the adventure, had flung himself upon him, and when I came up, had nearly drawn his knife, to cut his throat. We laughed heartily over the adventure, and it served as a topic to introduce many stories, during the evening, of our host's encounters with the wild animals of the mountains.

The black bear, which inhabits the northern regions of Europe and America, has certainly been misunderstood by Naturalists, in regard to its ferocity. So far as I ever learned, in a residence of many years among the mountains, where they are plenty, they never attack a full grown person, and very rarely a child. The young men hunt it with great perseverance and alacrity, and he would be laughed at as the veriest coward,

who would shrink from attacking a bear with an axe, or even a hand-spike.


Old Colonel Richardson, who still lives on the banks of Winnepissaukee Lake, tells many stories of his encounters with the bears in his earlier days, and with all the latitude which one must allow to old men and travellers, who, the adage says, "may lie by authority," they were certainly some of them most wonderful. He has kept a register of the number of bears he has killed, of their respective weights, of the manner in which each one was captured; a work, unmatched in interest, I venture to say, by any manuscript in the country.

His pet-story, though by no means to me the most interesting, is of a feat he once accomplished on an island in the Lake. He was out fishing with a lad, his nephew, some twelve years of age, only a few rods from the shore, and of a mild, starlight evening of September. They had had but indifferent luck, and were about raising the anchor to return, when a splashing a little distance in the water, attracted Richardson's attention. Waiting a moment to discern what it could be, he perceived a black bear, his snout raised above the water, puffing and splashing as is their custom when swimming, and making rapidly for the shore.

It is well known among the hunters, that, should an old bear be surprised in the water, however near he may be to the shore for which he is making, he will at once turn around, and swim back to the point from

which he started. Richardson was aware of this, and forgetting his want of fire-arms, or of any weapon sufficient to despatch an animal so tenacious of life as the bear, and full of zeal to capture what appeared to him to be an old settler, he at once drew in the anchor, and stationing the boy in the bows to look out for the course the animal should pursue, he started after him. The bear, aware of the danger, swam deep and fast, uttering every now and then a deep and surly growl, as the boat followed too near in his wake, and once or twice turning around to repel his pursuers by thrusting his nose against the side of the boat. This, however, Richardson avoided by suddenly backing water with his oars ; and skilfully directing his boat, now on this side, now on the other, of the puffing swimmer, he contrived to strike the shore at the very moment that the bear got safely to land.

The island to which they came, was one of the hundred elevations, which raise themselves like huge leviathans above the surface of Winnepissaukee Lake, with a bold shore, and a rocky bank, towering up a hundred feet, at an angle scarcely less than forty-five degrees. The bear, fitted for climbing a precipitous elevation by the sharpness of his fore-paws, made at once with all speed up the hill, and Richardson, springing from the boat, clambered after him on his hands and knees. Small, elastic, and stimulated by the hope of capturing a noble prize, the colonel followed like a cat, leaping from rock to rock, and bearing himself upward by the



branches and roots of straggling trees, which eked themselves from out the crevices of the rocks; until, just on the top, he overtook the bear, and grasping him by the hind legs, threw him with tremendous force halfway down the hill.

It was then, as he says, that he first came to his senses. There he stood alone; the dim twilight was just sufficient to show him his precarious footing; the boat was pushed out in the stream; the bear, recovered from his fall, was making towards him with angry growls; his hunting knife had been left at home; and he saw no way of escape. There was no time, however, for reflection; on the right or the left no place offered concealment; and the bear, with open mouth, was close upon him. At this moment he felt the rock upon which he stood, loosening itself from its fastening, and hastily shifting his position, he stooped down, grasped it with all his strength, and raising it from the ground, hurled it, with mortal aim, upon the approaching bear. Bruin saw the impending danger, but could not resist it, and with a broken skull rolled to the bottom.

The colonel returned the next morning with a party of neighbors; bore home his trophy in triumph; recorded its weight, seven hundred and eighty-one pounds, in printed italics; and keeps to this day the skin, as a memorial of the hazardous feat.

The next morning, our course was directed toward Littleton and the Franconia defile. We were not will-

ing to depart, however, without visiting the basin of a beautiful cascade, which falls from the hills a mile in the rear of Ethan Crawford's house. We found it equal in beauty to all we had anticipated. The sunbeams, penetrating through the trees, painted soft images in the shaded glen, and defined on the waters a beautiful contrast of lights and shadows, alternately silencing and obscuring their course. It is a charming dingle, and has received the name, we know not how, of the Fairy's Grave. The association of such a name, with such a place, is in the true spirit of poetry, and sure we are of the forgiveness of our readers, if we introduce the following, scratched hastily down, while listening to the music of its waters.

THE FAIRY'S DIRGE.

List to those softest notes
On the air flying;
Gently as sighs, it floats—
Song o'er the dying,—
List, for 'tis music sweet
Angels might borrow,
Borne on the breezes fleet,
Last knell of sorrow.

Fare thee well, sister dear,
Kind angels guard thee,
Earth, friends, nor lover near,
From home retard thee!
See, see, bright Peris come,
Allah's word bringing,
Hark thee, then,—haste thee home,
Plaintively singing.

Gone is our sister now,
Heavenward tending,
Mark with her cheek's rich glow,
Paleness is blending !
"Death now hath claimed his spoil,
Fling the pall over her,
Lap we Earth's lightest soil,
Gently to cover her."

Bind we long braids of pearl,
Round her brow twining,
With these fair ringlet's curl,
Gracefully twining—
Wreath round those folded hands,
On her breast lying,
Brightest of flow'ret bands,
Sweet odors sighing.

Short be the words we say,
O'er her grave bending ;—
Gentlest the fun'ral lay,
Upwards ascending ;
Spring flower's breath around,
Guards of her silent grot,
Music in waters' sound,
Requiem her resting spot.

COUNTRY VISITINGS.

When midnight o'er the moonless skies
Her pall of transient death has spread,
When mortals sleep, when spectres rise,
And none are wakeful but the dead ;
No bloodless shape my way pursues,
No sheeted ghost my couch annoys,
Visions more sad my fancy views,—
Visions of long departed joys.—W. R. SPENCER.

Not a hundred miles from Boston, is the country-house of Mr. C——. He was an acquaintance of mine in our younger days, and as I was about leaving the bustle and cares of the town for a month's residence at my aunt's in an adjoining country, he very civilly invited me to pass a week of it with some of our mutual friends at his residence. As I had often heard him speak of his beautiful place, and knew that his wealth and taste would adorn whatever it was lavished upon, I gladly accepted the invitation, and promised to be with him on the last of August.

My visit with the good lady, my aunt, had been one of unalloyed enjoyment. Besides the pure breezes and healthful walks of the country, there was a peaceful-

ness and quiet sobriety about her house, which delighted me. The house in which she lived was one of those goodly old structures which are scattered here and there over the country, with long gable ends, and cornices fantastically carved of pigeon wings and birds' claws. Sheds of every length and hue were scattered around, beneath the eaves of which martins and doves had held for long years an undisputed possession. In front were two majestic elms intertwining their branches so as to form almost a bower over the whole courtyard, and a few rods west, a clump of firs covered a ragged rocky dell, where the crows claimed a prescriptive seignior. Through this a dashing rivulet forced its way, fretting and chafing like an ill-curbed colt; but afterwards, by successive windings and more gentle falls, it grew quiet in its course, and gurgling pleasantly through a piece of downy meadow-ground, went through garden and lawn as still and dignified as the family steed. Below the garden, a little rustic paling enclosed a rude oak seat, over which bent an apple tree of favorite fruit, where I delighted, in my days of boyhood, to pore over the pages of Don Quixotte and Sir Charles Grandison, the only two works of fiction which my aunt's library contained.

Within the house every thing was the pattern of neatness. The carpeted parlors and well-sanded halls looked as if no mudded foot had ever intruded within their sacred precincts, and the white-scoured dressers; the shining pewter; the untouched fire-set of mirrored

brass ; the old glasses and silver tankard, and spacious punch bowl, were the relics and glory of the hospitable mansion. Every thing about the establishment bears the impress of age, and yet, like my aunt herself, every thing is fresh and green in its antiquity. The butler is a gray-headed, stout veteran, who was out with her husband in the severe campaign of seventy-seven, and though now past eighty years of age, is as bustling and self-important as he was thirty years ago. He is the life of the house ; waddles from room to room like the gray old gander in the poultry yard ; stands behind my aunt's chair at dinner ; chuckles with a sort of smothered laugh at her jokes ; corrects her facts, and prompts her memory when she tells a story ; talks much about the Major, my uncle ; and wears his cockade and laced waistcoat to church of Sundays. The cook is a few years his junior, but she was born in the service of my aunt's father, who was the original owner of the estate, and so claims, not without many rebuffs, priority of occupancy. The very plough-boys, so they are called, are old men, far past the meridian of life ; and the woman who comes every Monday morning to wash, has stood over the same tubs for six and thirty years. The horses are old, and the carriage is old ; the cows, and sheep, and working cattle are all old ; the steers long ago reached their majority, though it has never been acknowledged ; and the frisking days of the colt have been gone for many years. Old Tiger, the watch-dog, whose toothless jaws still gum at the ragged beggar,

seems oldest of them all, and of all, he only, shows that he is hastening to the bourne where his sire and grand-sire, Tigers too, rest before him.

My aunt has few neighbors, and fewer visitors. The parson is her guest every Sunday, and often smokes his pipe there on week-day evenings. She is the Lady Bountiful of the parish, and drives with her spiritual guide to visit the rich and comfort the mourner whoever they may be. Being a little liberally disposed in her religious creed, she and the parson, who is staunchly orthodox, have, oftentimes, disputes on the tenets where they differ. Methinks I see her seated in her straight-backed elbow chair, her spectacles raised upon her brow, and her knitting laid upon her lap, reading some new proof text on her side of the argument, to the grave old man opposite. The good man answers and smokes—answers and smokes again, unravelling the knotty point, and rebutting every proof; while my aunt doubts more and more, over every fresh pinch she takes from her silver snuff box.

It was here, that three weeks of my furlough from the city had passed away; when I bade my Aunt farewell, to spend the remainder of my month at the country seat of Mr. C——. It was a beautiful day on which I arrived, and my reception was as cordial and open as I had expected. The beauty of the situation, the elegance of the mansion, the natural scenery of mountain and forest and waterfall, the park enclosed for deer, the smooth lawn and well-trimmed hawthorn, all

surpassed my expectations of the place. The society, too, was such as could not fail to please me. It consisted of two or three ladies from the city, besides my friend's daughters; of a city clergyman, a distinguished member of Congress, an officer in the navy, and two or three young lawyers from a neighboring town. I promised myself a rich feast, and doubted not to enjoy it.

The evening passed pleasantly away, and being somewhat fatigued, I retired to bed before the rest of the company. Accustomed, at my aunt's, to rise at the cock crowing, and forgetting that my friend, being but a temporary resident of the country, would hardly dispense with his city habits of life, I came down at a quarter to five o'clock. No one was stirring in the house, and it was with great difficulty that I found the key to the door. The morning was beautiful but chilly, and in going down a flight of steps towards the garden, some frost having been formed from the dew, I most unfortunately slipped, and my toes pointing up to heaven, my hands pressed against the earth. I came bobbing, one step after the other, down to the bottom below. Out of patience with myself and all about me, I got up, and shaking myself from the accumulated gravel, and involuntarily looking around to discover if there were any witnesses of my unfortunate fall, I dimly discovered, through the blind mist of an intolerable head-ache, a flannel night-cap at the window above me. A moment more served to show me the old house-

keeper, who had just risen, with her hands clasped in the attitude of prayer, and the whites of her eyes turned up at this inexplicable sally of one of the guests. Nothing daunted, I still determined to go to the garden to look for fruit, but here a new hinderance met me, for the gate was locked. It was in vain that I pushed and pulled, the fastening would not give, and I returned to the house.

But here other evils awaited me. The house-maids were just astir, and engaged in cleaning the house. Doors were banging, crockery clattering, cutlery scouring, and an indefinable uproar and bustle pervaded the house. The slip-shod chamber-maid half-dressed, thrust her head into the room, and springing back on seeing me, tittering and guffawing in sheer impertinence, increased no little my already irritated temper. In vexation enough I escaped to the library, meaning to amuse myself with some books until called to breakfast; but here an awkward wench, with her head enveloped in a cotton bandana handkerchief, was raising such clouds of dust with her broom, that I was forced to make good my retreat to the parlor. In the parlor the same operation soon commenced, and finding from inquiring of a servant that it wanted yet two full hours to breakfast, I went again to my chamber, fully determined not to again get the start, by early rising, of a lazy world.

It was nine o'clock before the bell rang for breakfast, and my four hours of fasting having marvellously

quicken my appetite, I made no delay in answering its summons. I found most of the family assembled, and returning the cheerful greeting of my hostess, we sat down to the morning meal. But alas! what a breakfast for a hungry man! To be sure the coffee urn sent forth its fragrant steams over the table, and hot rolls and butter lay tempting before us. But what of that, to one whose appetite would be satisfied with ham and beef-steaks only, as a morning oblation? They seemed to me, those fair white rolls, like tender exotics, transplanted by some rude accident into a rough and ungenial clime. I made the best, however, of what was set before me; and though for once I cursed my folly at rising with the lark, I fully resolved never again, while at my friend's, to tempt myself to do it, by going to bed with the lamb.

Breakfast ended about eleven. The young gentleman talked of going out shooting, but the clear sky of morning had now begun to be covered with clouds, and promised no game, even to a handy sportsman. Billiards and cards then came as a resort, and the ladies sat down to a dissertation on fashions and dresses. For myself, I read and talked, hummed aloud and walked about, till dinner was announced; after which, escaping from the miserable aping of city customs in the heart of the country, I took my horse and resolved on an adventure alone.

The country around was wild and romantic; composed of rocks and broken hills, where the old forests

overhung valleys, watered by limpid streams, whose meadowy banks were grazed by innumerable herds of cattle. The various mountain ridges which traversed the country, sometimes ran in almost parallel lines, while at others they swept off in vast curves, and described a majestic amphitheatre, showing more or less the characteristics of the White Hills, of which they formed a continuation. In some places the transition from valley to highland was so gradual, that you were hardly aware of the undulations of surface in passing over it. In others, the frowning heights rise in precipitous walls from the plains; while again, the wooded and dome-like summits heave upwards from the broad meadows, like the gigantic castles of Genii.

The hills were frequently seamed with deep and dark ravines, whose sheer sides and dimly descried bottom, made the eye swim as it attempted to fathom them; while every now and then, long chasms, worn out by the course of some wild stream, and winding far in among the hills, made one think them the avenues to a land of spirits.

Like all mountainous districts, it held a population fond of the marvellous, and abounding in traditions and local tales of wondrous doings on the mountains. There are few, perhaps, among the peasantry who give full credence to these stories of magic and witchcraft, of supernatural sights and strange visitations, which are told from generation to generation, and are never lost; but still there is a great love of the wonderful in

all mankind, and so dark a cloud ever hangs over the mysterious future, that education can never fully dispel the faith, which clings, with the tenacity of life, to every manifestation from the spirit-land. In our own enlightened age, we laugh at the superstitions of our fathers, and most gravely conclude "that we are the people, and wisdom will die with us." But were they fools?—having eyes saw they not, as well as we?—and more deeply imbued with the truths of divine revelation, is it not possible that they might have been nearer the truth, in regard to supernatural visitations, than we shall ever be?

But let that pass. Among the inhabitants of the little village, which clustered around a meeting-house at the foot of the mountains, I had heard the keeper of the inn spoken of as a man full of narrative about the wonderful sights in the mountains; and as the evening promised to be a clear one for my return, I concluded to give him a call. The house was a low, red painted structure, standing out full into the street, and bearing on its corner a round sign, on which was a rampant horse, holding in his mouth a wisp of straw, where was inscribed "Levi Puncheon." The other side of it pleased me even more. Two men,—one round, burly, fat, red-faced, and well-dressed—the other, lean, pale, lantern-jawed, and ragged,—stood looking each other bolt upright in the face. From the lean man's mouth proceeded this couplet, in large gilt letters:

"Oh mortal man, who liv'st by bread,
What is it makes your face so red?"

The fat man answers, in letters equally large and shining,

“ Oh mortal man, with face so pale,
’Tis drinking Levi Puncheon’s ale.”

Although I had no desire to obtain the obesity, which Mr. Puncheon’s beverage promised to confer upon its votaries, I nevertheless alighted from my horse, and fastening him under the contiguous shed, entered the house. In the bar stood a pretty black-eyed girl, serving the customers to whatever they called for from the scanty store of liquors; and in a corner of the room, leaning backwards against the wall on two legs of his chair, his hands thrust into his pockets, and his feet placed upon the rounds, sat the landlord, telling one of his stories, for which he had become so famous, to half a dozen people around. He did not move from his comfortable position, but nodding familiarly, and pointing me to a vacant chair, went on with his story. Of course I did not fail to become at once one of the circle of listeners.

“ As I was saying, neighbors,—I was telling a story, sir, about the Devil’s Bridge, which lies up yonder among the mountains, just beyond John Hartford’s farm,—you know John Hartford?—or maybe you don’t,—he’s the oldest man in town, sir, and has been a great rogue in his day; some people say a pirate, but that’s neither here nor there. At any rate, there lies the Devil’s Bridge,—you may see with your own eyes,—down half a mile, at the crossing of the brook,

or you can go to it in little better than an hour. My daughter there will guide you, she's often been there with travellers who come to stay here in the country in summer time. Perhaps you'd like to go, sir; one dollar I charge only, and t'will take half a day there and back again,—but that's neither here nor there." I assented, however, to the host's proposition, and without further circumlocution, he went on.

"The place, as I was saying, neighbors, was so steep, and the torrent so strong, that nobody could build a bridge there. It was long time ago, before the Indians had gone; and though many people tried, and carpenters, and joiners, and masons helped them, no bridge could they make stay. It would last a week, perhaps, or a month, or may be a sixmonth, but it was always sure, before New Year's, to be swept down the stream. Well, people got tired of working there, and they said a bridge couldn't be made to stay there, and that a new way must be looked up to get over the hills.

"Well, the town appointed a committee,—for you see, sir, the town took it into hand, because it was a public road,—the towns in this part of the country are obliged to make the roads, mend the bridges, and all that;—I'm told they are not down country,—perhaps you know, sir,—but that's neither here nor there. Well, as I was saying, the town committee met together, advertised for proposals, and looked the matter all over, to see what could be done. Have a bridge

they must, or else be indicted by the county ; but how to get it, that was the question. One evening they were talking the matter over ; one was suggesting one plan, and another another plan, and a third no plan at all ; when a good-looking man, whom nobody had ever seen before, came into the room, and proposed to build a bridge, and warrant it, provided they came to his terms. ‘What are they?’ asked the committee. ‘That I shall have the first one who crosses it!’ answered the stranger. It was a hard bargain. Nobody doubted who the strange person was, nobody wished to give him what he asked. But then the bridge *must* be built ; no other way had been devised for building it, and it was the last chance ; so after higgling a little about the terms, they closed the bargain, and behold, the next morning the bridge was built !

“The news soon spread over the town ; the people all assembled ; the stranger stood on one side of the bridge, and the citizens on the other ; but no one dared to cross it. A singular predicament enough it was, for the work was done, and nobody like to be benefited. Every one’s wits were at work, but all to no purpose ; for there wasn’t patriotism enough in town to comply with the conditions.”

“And what was the end of it?” asked one of the auditors, tired of the tediousness of the story.

“Why, while they were all debating what to do, a large dog, espying a fox on the other side, sprang across, and so settled it. The devil was so angry, that,

stamping his foot on the bridge, he struck out a stone, as you may see to this very day."

Anxious to see the Devil's Bridge, and to explore the place, I made an arrangement to visit it on the following day, and the dark-eyed bar-maid agreed to accompany me. Before I left, she directed me how to find the place, and where to leave my horse; and early on the afternoon of the next day, I excused myself from the dinner-table, and started on my excursion.

A rough scramble among the hills brought me at an early hour to the place of meeting. The fair guide had not yet appeared; and after wandering for some time about the wild and romantic spot, I stretched myself upon the side of the bridge, under which dashed and foamed a wild stream from the hills, and lulled by the sound and the coolness of the place, I surrendered myself to a thousand musing fancies.

It was the place of all others for that dreaming sort of meditation, which makes up the sweetest hours of life. I was far from home; alone in the midst of a deep forest, which covered the mountains on every side; and on the very bridge which had been crossed in terror a thousand times by the belated cow-boy, or credulous swain. My thoughts ran back to the days of my childhood; called up the nursery tales, that had rendered the sleepless hours of night a perfect terror; dwelt with thick-coming fancies on the early companions of my summer walks and winter sleigh-rides; awaked many a scene long forgotten, when

friends and loved ones shed sunshine on my path, and the fresh spirits of youth made time to tread on flowers. I must have remained for some time in this dreaming mood, when a slight rustling in the shrubbery around me, interrupted my idle musings.

I hastily rose up, and turning round, a female figure in a drapery of snowy whiteness, appeared to flit before me, and then to pass down the path, that led winding to the foot of the ravine. The time had passed more rapidly than I was aware of, for the evening twilight was in its softest glow as I gazed upon the moving figure, which passed slowly downwards, beckoning me the while to follow. The height of the person struck me immediately as being about the same as that of the buxom daughter of the landlord, and though the proportions seemed more slender, I had no doubt, upon recalling her arch expression of countenance while her father was relating the story of the Devil's Bridge, that she was getting up a little diversion at my expense. A pair of dark eyes is fated to be my undoing ; nor could I ever resist the temptation to follow, where a pretty girl should lead ; and now, when so graceful a drapery, and so witching an air, fled but to be followed, I could not hesitate ; so flying down the path, I hastened to follow wherever she should lead.

The bank was steep, and covered with loose stones and a stunted growth of fern, so that it required my utmost caution to avoid stumbling, and being precipitated headlong to the bottom. The foot-path wound a long

distance along the declivity, now plunging almost perpendicularly down a precipitous steep, and anon rising and bending over the sides of the spruce-grown tumuli ; and it was not unfrequently that for several minutes I lost sight altogether of my guide. Once I was quite on the point of giving up the chase, recollecting the lateness of the day and the distance I was from any habitation ; but a glimpse of the white mantle, fluttering in the wind, just before me, induced me to resume my efforts to overtake its wearer, and to claim the forfeit I was sure I should deserve, if I met with success in my rash and dangerous pursuit.


It must have been more than a mile, by the circuitous path, to the bottom of the glen, and I was completely exhausted when I made my last leap over the rough furze in my way. Stopping a moment to recover my breath for a fresh pursuit, in case I should again see the lady of the white mantle, I was struck with the exceeding beauty of the glen, set off, as it was, in the finest contrast, by the lofty grandeur of the mountains. The glowing rays of the sun, long set in the valleys, still played on the tops of a vast aggregate of mountains, which lifted themselves up in continuous masses so as to overlay every portion of the horizon, and seemed to prop the heavens like the huge cyclopean rampart of some other sphere. Lower down, the widely extending sides were marked by dark shadows, which, accumulating at the bases, gave prominence and distinctness to their outlines. The ravine was of lime-

stone, and in many places so worn by the rapid stream dashing through it, that it was almost cavernous. High sides of pure white marble often enclosed the circling eddies of water, and then, spreading out, would show huge stalagmites, starting up in every variety of form, all over the surface. At this moment it was surpassingly beautiful, enveloped in a gentle veil of twilight, which softened every roughness, and threw over the whole distance I could see, an inimitable charm. It seemed as if nature had planted here a garden for the spirits of the mountain. It fairly enchanted my gaze, with its innumerable and curious forms of cupolas, towers, minarets, glittering palaces, and variegated houses, fronted with galleries and balconies ; and for a moment made me forget the fair object of my pursuit.

It was but a moment, however, for no sooner had the beauty of the scene about me flashed upon my senses, than the figure, like the sprite of the cavern, darting from behind a huge stalactite, passed rapidly by me, beckoning impatiently for me to follow. I did not discover her face, but the light fairy form, the round ivory shoulders, the flowing ringlets, the elastic step, were enough to warrant me the beauty of my fleet conductor, while the hour of the day, and the loneliness of the place, added a mystery to the adventure which I could not but choose to unravel. No sooner had she passed me, than I started in pursuit, and springing over the rivulet, and clambering up a

steep acclivity, over which my guide had leaped with the ease and gracefulness of a fawn, I found myself again in the chase. Far above, the light still streamed down from the rich glowing clouds of evening, so that I could discern the place through which I passed ; and though I delayed not in the chase, yet the infinite variety and beauty of the columns of limestone, supporting the vast arched roof ; the dripping of the water from the white stalactites ; the concave sides, fretted in ten thousand beautiful crystals ; the smooth hard floor of one solid uncleft rock of marble ; and the long perspective continually stretching out before me, were not lost upon me. Still I did not overtake the lady of the mantle, and stranger still, I had not at any time, though counting myself a good runner, gained upon her in the least. Over the long, level floor ; through small, narrow avenues ; up steep ascents ; round huge stone columns ; beside sheer precipices, had I pursued, helter skelter, my headlong chase ; but all to no effect.

Wearied with the efforts, and vexed beyond all bounds at my ill success, I threw myself down at the foot of a little fall of water, and reaching over the basin, round and perfect as if carved by human art, quenched my thirst from the pure limpid stream. The fall beneath which I lay was one of a long succession of cascades, reaching far up, as it seemed to me, to the surface of the earth, over which the waters poured and dashed, sending their spray on either side and darkening all beyond. As I raised myself from the brink of the



basin, I saw in the reflection of the clear water, leaning over my shoulder, the countenance of my guide, and that single glimpse produced upon my feelings a singular and almost preternatural effect. The features were not those, I had expected to behold, of the laughing daughter of the host ; but of one, with whom I was familiar in bygone years, and who had long since been dead.

It was the look of one, around whose name, when life was new, the whole tissue of my hopes and fears were woven,—for whom all my aspirations after worldly honors had been breathed,—in whom all my dreams of earthly happiness had been wound up. She had mingled in purer hours with all the fond and home-loving friends of my boyhood ; she had been the queen of each romantic vision of my youth ; and amid the worldly cares and selfish struggles of matured life, the thought of her had been separate and apart in my bosom, with no companion in its hallowed chamber save the religion learned at a mother's knee, save that hope of better things, which once implanted by a mother's love, survives amid the storms and conflicts of the world,—a beacon to warn us more often, alas ! how far we have wandered from the teachings, than to guide us to the haven where they were meant to lead.

I had loved her, and I had lost her ; how, it matters not. Perchance disease had reft her from me by some sudden blow, at the moment when possession made her dearest. Perchance I saw her fade in the arms of an-

other, while I was banned and barred from ministering to a spirit, that stole away to the grave with all I prized on earth. It boots not how I lost her; but he who has centred every thought and feeling in one only subject; whose morning hopes have for years gone forth to the same goal; whose evening reflections have for years come back to the same bourne; whose waking visions and sleeping dreams have for years been haunted by the same image; whose schemes of toil and advancement have all tended to the same end;—he knows what it is to have the pivot, upon which every wheel of his heart hath turned, wrenched from its centre,—to have the sun, round which revolved every joy that lighted his bosom, plucked from its system.

It was her own face,—the face of my own loved Caroline! I could not mistake it. As I looked upward again, there it stood, bending towards me, from the thick spray that rose and curled over the foaming waters, smiling in all the witching loveliness that entailed my young heart, and beckoning still with unsophisticated grace for me to follow her. I could not resist the enchantment. The magic wand that swayed my whole being in childhood, the power over my spirit that knew no bounds, that recognised no rival, was again over me, and I bowed to the enchantment. Although the last rays of twilight had departed, and a gloom spread over the whole scene around me, I could not refrain from yielding to the illusion; I was no longer myself; and I felt that to clasp my arms once

again round that form ; to imprint one kiss more, even though it were the last, upon that queenly brow ; to gaze into those dark lustrous orbs of light ; to inhale the fragrance of that pure breath, sweeter than violets ; to live, were it only for a moment, once again in those smiles ; were enough,—were all of heaven.

Careless of whither the path might lead me, reckless of all consequences, I started again in new pursuit of the loved one. Wherever she went I followed. Nothing daunted me. And had the foul Fiend himself stood in my way, it could not have deterred me from my fixed purpose to overtake the being so mysteriously revealed to me, or to perish in the attempt. I overleaped obstructions, scaled precipitous walls, rushed down sudden and steep declivities, threaded intricate ways, and pursued, without fatigue or weariness, the figure flying before me. At last, coming to a deep and narrow corner of the cavern, from which no outlet proceeded, she suddenly stopped, and turning upon me with open arms and a smile I can never forget till my latest day, waited my approach.

I sprang forward to the embrace, for which my heart panted with untold desire, when lo ! opening my eyes, I saw bending over me the laughing face of the inn-keeper's daughter ; and springing upon my feet, found I had been asleep all night upon the Devil's Bridge. My friends had become alarmed by my late absence from home, and had sent to the village to inquire if I had been there, when the pretty bar maid, first remembered

her engagement with me, and started to find me at the place agreed upon for a rendezvous. I need not add, that the singular dream I had had, among the mountains, did not so far affect me, that I forgot the tempting lips of the merry girl, nothing loth to be so remembered ; and unfastening my horse, I made all haste back to the Hall.

I arrived before the first bell was rung for rising, and making my toilet in my chamber, was among the first to appear at the breakfast table. Some new comers had been added to the party during my absence the night before, and as several of the old guests were to depart by the mail coach, which was soon to pass by, the cook had provided a more substantial repast than was spread the morning before, tea, coffee, cold meats, and buckwheat cakes, were distributed according to the tastes of the different guests, and the conversation soon began to break out, with all the liveliness and freshness of morning mirth.

I found myself to be the hero of the morning, and though I felt little humor for bantering, the anxiety I had occasioned the party the night before, induced me to bear, with all the patience in my power, the jokes which were cracked upon me, from every part of the table.

“ And where were you last night, Tom ?” asked my inquisitive friend opposite, fixing his little rat eyes upon me across the table. “ A terrible fright was that you gave us, my boy ! Were you swapping horses ?—or lifting poultry ?—or watching for falling stars ?—”

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"Or making love?"—suggested a thin, prinking maiden lady, at my side.

"Or robbing a bank?"—said a black whiskered, handsome cashier.

"Did you see the rose-colored Aurora, sir?"—said the little withered Professor.

"Or a pair of bright eyes?"—softly whispered my host's eldest daughter.

"Or a ghost?"—chimed in my waggish friend. "Aye," that's it," continued he, as he saw me change countenance at the suggestion, "a ghost, indeed! well, out with it, and unburden your conscience, Tom! You know the old song:

"And do not go mourn for that, my dear!

And do not go mourn for that!

He who stays out at night, will come home in a fright,

Though he sees nothing more than a rat."

The remark set every body's tongue in motion; the attention of the whole company was immediately turned to me; and a vast deal of bantering, criticising of my pale looks, curious inquiries, and suspicious hints, at once took place. "A ghost!" exclaimed the black banker." "A ghost!" cried the little professor." "A ghost! a ghost!" echoed all the ladies. "And did you see a ghost?" "Do you really believe in ghosts?" "Where did you find a ghost, pray?" burst from all parts of the table, capped by the interminable wag, "Had the ghost a night-cap on, Tom?"

I confess that I could not enter with ease and spirit

into the joke ; and I felt chagrined and mortified at my tell-tale face. Indeed I felt so embarrassed I could hardly speak ; and as I stuttered out my sentences, hemmed—recalled words—tried to laugh, but only grimaced ; and blushed scarlet, as a school girl—the laugh grew louder, and the joking still more current. No man likes the joke of a whole company upon him, however well he can take those of a single person ; and notwithstanding all my efforts at good nature, I found myself fast losing my temper.

“Madam,” said I, addressing the hostess, “I leave it to you ; I don’t think it fair play ; indeed, ma’am, I’m in earnest !” (Here a suppressed titter came from two young girls.) “I am, ma’am, I assure you ! This is all vastly pleasant—indeed, vastly pleasant—but I pray you to believe, ma’am, that I’m as little superstitious as any one. It is true, ma’am, that I had a singular dream,” (a miserable grin here pervaded every face) “or—or—perhaps—a—a sight—a vision, ma’am.” (A loud laugh from all at the table.) “Gentlemen, I can bear a joke as well as any one, but I hope you’ll not push me too far ! I’m cool, gentlemen,” said I, striking my fist upon the table, as I saw suppressed grins and strange contortions of face all around me. “I am cool, gentlemen, but, I *can’t* bear too much ! and if gentlemen choose to insult me, they must look to it. But I wish to say, once for all, that last night, at the Devil’s Bridge——”

“Devil’s Bridge ?”—liaped the provoking hoyden.

"Devil's Bridge?" exclaimed the red-nosed politician. "Devil's Bridge!" repeated the whiskered financier. "Devil's Bridge?" "Devil's Bridge?" cried every one at the table; and a round ungovernable peal of laughter followed. I could stand it no longer. Every effort I made to restrain my headlong temper only added new speed to it. It was more than mortal could bear. I rose quickly from the table; strode heavily to the door; turned fiercely round to the table; and said, as well as I could, while my rising gorge almost choked me, "I have borne, enough, gentlemen! From this hour, if any body speaks to me on the subject of your merriment this morning, I shall very civilly decline answering. If any gentleman alludes to it, I shall consider it—I shall consider it an intentional insult, and shall conduct myself accordingly,"—giving an emphasis to my period.

The joke had indeed gone far enough. Several gentlemen rose from the table and begged me to return, protesting that no insult was intended by the merriment. My host entreated I would overlook it! The ladies were shocked! And I could do no less than return.

"You have had your joke, gentlemen," said my host, "and now let the matter pass. Your merriment, however, reminds me of a story I will tell you. The morning promises rain, and there will be no sport abroad; so if you choose to adjourn to the library, we'll try and find some amusement among ourselves at home.

"But do you really believe in supernatural events?" asked the tall officer, as my host drew up his easy chair into our circle, to begin his story.

"That's a difficult question to answer," replied the host, "and it will require a longer time for me to explain my belief than you would be willing to wait for the story. When we know all the laws of nature, of which we, as yet, know scarcely an infinitesimal fraction, it will be time enough to determine what are, and what are not, supernatural events."

"Did you ever see a ghost?" inquired the fat parson.

"No! but my cousin Alice did," answered my host.

"And who was she?" inquired the lean spinster.

"I'll tell you," said my host; and immediately commenced his story, as follows.

THE ADVENTURE OF MY COUSIN ALICE.

"My uncle's was the happiest family on the Hill-side. All along, for many miles, where the broad breast of the grey old mountain hove and broke into elevations of the brightest green-sward, and valleys of the richest loam, were cottages and hamlets peeping out from behind thick clumps of shading elms, filled with the laughter of children and the pleasant hum of industry. Well-stocked farms; thrifty orchards; huge stone walls, running for long miles, and dividing the highland tillage into snug cultivated grass plats; neat school-houses; tidy lads and lasses; fat cattle, fine dairies,

sleek horses, and a temperate, hard-working, and civilly-disposed population, characterized the part of the town always known as the Hill-side. The best crops were to be found growing there in the summer ; the largest contributions for charitable purposes could be collected from the homesteads at the harvest gathering ; our pastor had there his warmest friends and most liberal parishioners ; and the good housewives complained, that every premium at the Fair, do what they could, always went to the skilful girls on the Hill-side.

“ But of all the houses on the Hill-side, my uncle’s was the neatest ; of all the large families of girls and boys, his was the comeliest and thriftiest ; of all the firesides, none was so open, and cheerful, and happy, as my uncle Lee’s. The door of his one-storied cottage was never shut in the poor man’s face, nor the measure of wheat stinted to the hard-earned wages of the widow. ‘ Never strike the bushel, boys,’ would the good man say ; ‘ never strike the bushel from which the orphans eat.’ And in the long droughts of spring-time, or the mildewing rains of autumn, many a lone woman’s cry went up to Heaven, that Asa Lee’s crops might be watered, and his barns filled. Through the whole country, far and near, the Oak Nest, for so they called it, was known and loved ; the boys grew up stout and well-behaved ; the girls blithesome and comely ; and never of one of them was reproach uttered, or slander told.

“ It was the early evening of a winter day, that my

story commences. The out-door work had all been completed, and three stout boys sat on one side of the crackling fire in the kitchen, at the Oak-Nest, engaged in mending an ox-yoke which had just been broken. On the other side sat three as fine laughing damsels as you would find the country over; one turning a foot-wheel, the other two busily knitting. The table was spread, the urn was hissing in the corner, and the good dame, dressed in gray, with a white cap nicely plaited on her head, sat in the straight-backed elbow chair, in a large window scooped out of the thickness of the ancient wall, waiting the return of the good man. It was market-day at a neighboring town, and this was about the time for his return. The night was cold, and a snow storm during the afternoon had rendered the roads heavy; but then the moon was up clear in the heavens, and the farmer drove two as stout roadsters as there were on the whole mountain. Presently sleigh bells were heard in the distance, one moment of stillness ensued, when the youngest boy, clapping his hands, and crying out, 'That's father, I know,' ran to the door. A moment more dispelled all doubt, the rough voice of the farmer was heard giving orders about his horses, and the door opening, the cheerful 'Good evening all,' which never failed to send joy to every heart in that household, gave assurance that all was right.

"An unexpected visitor, however, came with the farmer. The son of one of his customers, a rich merchant

at the market town, had been sent from college to *rusticate*, as they call it, for some little misdemeanor, which spirited boys are apt to commit, and his father had been advised to place him, for two or three years, upon a farm. In casting about where he should send him, my uncle's voice fell upon his ear from the outer store, when, starting up like one who has successfully solved a difficult problem, he cried out, 'I have found it,' and asking him into the counting room, at once made the proposition. They were old friends, had grown up together from boys, and loved each other as brothers; so it required but little persuasion to gain my uncle's consent to take the boy into his family. The arrangement was at once made, and the young collegian returned home with my uncle.

" 'This is Frank Langley, wife,' said the good man, after the first salutations were given,—'Fred Langley's son,—you remember Fred, our old schoolfellow?—He is come to live with us a year or two, to see if he can't get farmer's wages, good health and sobriety. Frank,—that's my wife,—your mother for the next twelve months. My boys too, Frank! Tom, Bill, Harry; and the girls, Anna, Jane, Alice. Make yourself at home, Frank, without any ceremony, and I'll warrant you happy before a fortnight.'

"The young man bowed gracefully at each successive introduction, and returned the hearty welcome he received from every member of the family, with an open and pleasant countenance, that won him more favor at

once in the farmer's family, than weeks of the most irreproachable quiet and reserve could have done. His manners were cordial and gentlemanly, and though his face could hardly be pronounced handsome, there was in it the beauty of spirit and good nature, which bespoke, at first sight, your kindest interest in his welfare. The warmest seat was given him at the fire—the best seat, too, at the table,—the seat next my sweet cousin Alice,—and the manner in which he had been received had evidently gained his regard at the very outset. Alice, too, had fancied him; his full blue eye contrasted far too strongly with those clear black orbs of hers for her to have felt indifference towards him,—for let Phrenologists say what they will, it is the opposite of that we possess ourselves, that strikes us most in others,—and he whom Alice fancied, was rarely discontented or unhappy.

“The other members of my uncle's family were among the best of people; but Alice was beautiful, she had grown up under the dews, and breath, and light of heaven, among the solitary hills; and eighteen years had never ushered into womanhood a sweeter, brighter being, than this pet one of Oak-Nest. None could tell what it was, a painter could never have caught it, but there was an air of felt, unspeakable grace and lustre that floated about her,—a fairy lightness in all her movements, rendering her the charm and beauty of her quiet home. It was not her slightly freckled face, fair as the lily, yet tinged with such a faint and leaf-like

crimson, that it seemed far more like the rose; nor her cherry kiss-tempting lips; nor her graceful and rounded figure; nor the neatly formed foot, peeping like a pigeon from out its dove-cote; nor her eyes so soft, and anon so flashing with thought; nor any thing you could describe. But there it was, dancing in the brightness of her fairy form; mantling in the smile of a heart happy in its purity and innocence. The whole family might have been compared to a beautiful wreath of flowers, where Alice was the moss rose-bud, from which, though you admired the sweetness of all the rest, you could never turn your eyes.

"The evening passed away very pleasantly. The girls liked Frank, because, though nurtured in the first society of town, he showed no pride, affected no superiority; and Frank liked the girls, because they were pretty and agreeable. He was particularly attentive to my cousin Alice; was unreserved and playful; agreed with her in all her girlish notions; romped with her about the room; pinched her plump cheek; chucked her under the chin; stole a round kiss from her lips when she went to bed; and bade her remember him till morning.

"Let it not be supposed that all this took place in the presence of my uncle and aunt, for they had gone to bed, and the young folks sat up till long past midnight. In short there was nobody knew better how to make his way among the girls, than Frank Langley. He had taken complete possession of their hearts; had

walked out with them in the moonlight ; had something kind to say to every one ; cracked his own jokes and laughed at theirs ; told them of college pranks ; and ended with half scaring them out of their wits, by a long ghost story, of which he said he believed every word.

“ Well, gentlemen, Frank was shown to his room, up a large staircase of the old house, and along a dark gallery, filled with all sorts of broken spinning wheels, disjointed looms, chairs wanting a leg, and sofas an arm, sprained tables, hipped bureaux, and spavined chests. It was a long dreary hall, seldom visited except to store away some broken article of household furniture, and far off from every habitable part of the house, except the chamber of my cousin Alice ; who, being of a romantic turn, had selected it, to be less disturbed in her contemplations. Her chamber was at one end of the house, Frank’s at the other, and this old hall ran between them, like a great booby telltale ; so that when Alice heard Frank step on the stair, she knew that all her quiet meditations were gone for ever.

“ Well, my cousin Alice undressed and went to bed. At first she locked the door, and left the light burning on the table. But after trying a long time, she could not get to sleep, for thinking of the handsome collegian. Then she got up, unfastened the door very quietly, and went to bed again. But it would not do ; sleep she could not ; so reaching out of bed, she blew out the light ; and tried it again. It was all to no

purpose ; the old house clock struck one ; two ; and their lay my cousin, like a rose-bud under a plantain leaf, courting sleep harder and harder, but in vain. What she was thinking of all this time, I never heard,—perhaps the young stranger,—perhaps the ghost story he had told her,—perhaps the kiss,—no matter what,—and it's no use taking up our time conjecturing.

“ By this time my cousin was getting nervous. She covered her head with the blankets, and keeping very still, said her prayers again, and tried to go to sleep. She was just beginning to drowse, when a rustling near the door startled her. She drew the blankets closer over her head and listened. Nothing stirred. Pretty soon, however, she felt something moving on her pillow, and her poor heart went pit-a-pat with terror. Then she was sure somebody whispered her name,—she listened,—and ‘ Alice, Alice,’ came distinctly on her ear. Poor girl, she was almost dead ! Human nature could stand it no longer. She leaped from her bed, overturned the light stand, knocked down the lamp, and rushed towards the door. But here a new cause of terror appeared, for no sooner was her hand upon the latch, than a light from the entry streamed into the room from the crevices of the door. What could it be ? Was the house on fire ? Was the collegian in the entry with his light ? or, worse than all, had some supernatural influence come with the stranger, to take possession of the house ?—She ventured to peep through

the keyhole ; the entry was light as noonday ; and the old furniture, that had cumbered it ever since she could remember, was animate with life.

“ Upon a three-legged table was spread a glorious supper of turkeys and ducks, chickens and goslings, rounds of beef and flitches of bacon, and around it was a dozen crippled chairs, some lame in the knee, some crooked in the back, but all in fine spirits, and partaking of the smoking viands with great gusto. At the head stood a round bellied, pussy old revolutionary veteran, whose long arms flourished the carver, and distributed the choice bits with all the skill of a Parisian gourmand. By his side, on one hand, sat a fair widow of thirtysix or thereabouts, dressed in the gayest colors, and apparently greatly pleased with the attentions of the veteran, to whom she talked with unintermitting volubility. On the other, was a slim damsel, scarcely out of her teens, whose melancholy air, and stiff manners, my cousin Alice attributed to some painful disease of the spine. An old lady of great dignity sat at the principal seat on the side, whose dress of scarlet damask would have shown to great advantage, but for the frequent patched and unpatched holes, perceptible in it ; while opposite, was a sweet, smiling girl, with a sprained ancle, whom a roystering young blade kept courting, with his fingers and feet, under the table. Three or four old wooden chairs served as waiters, and limped about on their duties with great dexterity.

“ But this was not all. There were other articles of furniture whose conduct shocked the modesty of my cousin Alice to an unpardonable degree. A tall lusty cheese-press, in the corner, fondled a prinking, coquetting light stand in most outrageous ways, for whom a weak mirror, standing near by, was perfectly *cracked* ; and an amorous old sun-dial, crusted with eighty winters, gave great occasion for scandal, by setting on the lap, and laying on the bosom of a fat young time-piece from Connecticut.

“ Well, ladies and gentlemen, my cousin Alice stood it as long as she could, and was just considering how to escape, when at a noise on the stairs, the lights went out, the student’s door on the other side of the hall, which, till this moment, she had never noticed was open, slammed to, and she flew back to bed. It was her mother’s step she had heard, and no sooner had the good lady entered the room, than Alice was fast asleep.

“ “ Alice ! Alice ! ” said the good lady ; but Alice did not stir.

“ “ Alice ! wake up ! wake up ! ” Alice turned over, and rubbing her eyes, as one will do, when suddenly wakened, saw her mother.

“ “ Oh, mother, mother ! ” exclaimed the affrighted girl ‘ how glad I am you have come ! I have had a horrible dream ! ’ ”

“ And so it was nothing but a dream, after all ! ” exclaimed the parson.

“ Pshaw, all a bubble !” whispered the cashier.

“ But what became of Frank Langley ?” inquired the spinster.

“ Oh, he and Alice made a match of it, and before spring were on a voyage to Europe, for a wedding tour.”

COUNTRY DOCTORS.

If any man sin, let him fall into the hands of a Physician.—ECCLÉSIASTICUS.

Of all classes of men I know of, who live in this world, and hope for another, that of Country Doctors is the only nondescript. Other classes have been and can be described; each and all have some distinctive characteristic by which they may be recognized, some prevailing mark, like the scowl on a pettifogger's brow, or the gout on an alderman's toe, which shows itself, and will show itself everywhere, as long as the one argues petty causes, and the other eats good dinners. But the country doctor has none; his genus and species, and order, are yet to be determined; in his own language, he is a *hard case*. He may be fat or lean, tall or short, flaccid or muscular, taciturn or talkative, swift or slow, married or single, any thing, in fact, except rich; *that* he can never be; for everywhere, all over the world, the country Doctor is a *poor devil*.

Such latitude, of course, ruins all classification. There is nothing you can fix upon which is peculiarly his own,—which he does not in fact enjoy in common with

others. Turn him on every side, look at him in every light, try by all the senses, and he is still the same undescribed, indescribable animal. Travel through the whole county of Coos, and collect every grayhound specimen you can find; go to Dartmouth College, and examine every unfeathered biped in the Lecture Room; take a dozen promiscuously as they come in any ten miles square in New England; and I defy you to define them, by any rules of technology, which Symmes and Eaton can give. So widely do they differ, so extensively do their various ramifications run into all classes of society, that you might as well classify a Centaur, or define the boundary line between the vegetable and animal creation, as to classify or define a country Doctor.

Some people make it a matter of wonder, where so many Doctors come from; for you find them everywhere, all over the country, and like the frogs that the prophet called from the Nile, they come forth abundantly and cover the land. To the dwellers of the country, however, this is clearly understood. Every thriving farmer wishes to see his family of boys well settled in the world. The oldest labors at home till he is twenty-one, and then taking his freedom suit of homespun blue, he shoulders his axe, and wending his way far off to some new settlement, builds a log-house, clears a farm, marries a wife, and raises his crop of corn and children, as each year goes round. The second does the same; and so the third and fourth. The

youngest son most likely stays at home, and apportioning each girl as she marries, and supporting the old folk till their death, inherits for himself and children the ancient homestead. Now if among the growing family, one son has been unfortunate,—if a shoulder has been sprained, or a leg broken ; if disease have debilitated the constitution for the rough labors of husbandry, or some hereditary ailment predisposed the victim to a shorter life ; nay, if he be imbecile or idle, thriftless or lazy ; he is the Levite of the flock, set apart for the profession, and the hardness of the healthy laborers, and the proceeds of the farm, are taxed for his support. Nor is this, in the kindly feeling which universally prevails among those who have been nurtured under the same roof tree, ever regarded as burdensome ; each boy cheerfully furnishes his quota to the general purse, which pays the brother's bills ; and those who are already settled for themselves, transmit with promptness, as a sacred duty, their annual contribution.

It is not always, indeed, that the educated son becomes a physician. There are instances when, from some sudden casualty, the sturdy plough-boy becomes a sturdy advocate, whose name is famous all over the world ; or raises his voice in the forum ; or “ wags his pow in a pulpit ;” but more often, from the less expense and greater prospect of success, he adopts the healing art. Four terms at an academy in some neighboring town, to learn the rudiments of the Latin

tongue ; a few months at compounding drugs in the shop of the village apothecary ; three years of reading with a neighboring doctor ; and two courses of lectures at some Medical College ; a lancet in his pocket, a pair of saddle-bags, a horse,

“ In stature, sturdy, large, and tall,
With mouth of meal and eye of wall,”

and the young aspirant goes forth, empowered, like the beast in Revelations, “ to kill a fourth part,” at least, of those whom he may meet on his way.

Among the five Æsculapians who cared for the weal of our town, there were two, who seemed destined, by a law of their natures, to afford a perpetual and ludicrous contrast. The one was a short, stout, ruddy faced man, somewhat past the middle of life, with a knowing look, and a flexible nose, to which he could give a whimsical twist when he had a mind to be roguish. The other was tall, far above the common size of tall men,—lean, bony, and pale complexioned ; a dry, shrewd kind of body, with eyelids hanging down over his dull gray goggles, like cotton window curtains. The one was quick, straight, direct in all his movements, sudden in temper, rapid in thought, and vociferous in conversation ; blustering when he was likely to be opposed, like the noisy tenant of a poultry yard, and closing upon his antagonist with some unanswerable quotation, ended by a scrape of the foot, and a prodigious *Ahem !* that always left him victor in the field

of argument. The other was slow and halting in speech, stooping in person, and so awkward in gait, that his legs at every step seemed parting company at the knees, like the two sides of an isosceles triangle; and yet withal so doggedly obstinate that he was never known to have changed his opinion, when it had once been given. In short Dr. Diddle was a smart man; Dr. Biddle a judicious one. Dr. Diddle a democrat; Dr. Biddle a federalist. Dr. Diddle an advocate of general principles in the medical art; Dr. Biddle devotedly attached to a particular theory.

Both were prominent men in the town, and both active practising physicians. Of course it oftentimes happened, that they met together in the chamber of disease on professional consultation, and while each argued for his own opinion, and supported it by abundant references to his favorite author, neither abating a jot from his first expressed opinion, the sick man, wearied and wasting, grew sicker and died.

It so happened, on a time, that they were both called in a case of sudden extremity, and both arrived at the same moment—the one in his mud-bespattered sulkey, his horse sweating and foaming from the rapid speed he had been forced into over two miles of rough and hilly road, the other on his slow-jogging mare, his knees reaching upwards at every step for the pommel of the saddle, and his pantaloons ambitiously aiming to rise above the knees. The case was really one of emergency, requiring prompt and decisive action. A

little old Frenchman, wilted and dried up by eighty summers, had mounted, in his wonderment and dotage, on the tender behind a locomotive, which was driving for the first time on a trial trip over the western rail road. Dizzy with the rapid motion, and withal a little flustered by too frequent sips at a certain brown jug, he tumbled from his seat, and whirled into a somerset by the rapid rate he was moving, fell to the earth like dead. He had just been brought home and put into bed, when the two doctors reached the door.

Dr. Diddle entered first, and coming on tip-toe to the bed, uncovered the bruised and broken octogenarian, and gently raising his arm, applied the fingers of one hand to the pulse, at the same time passing the other down the stomach and limbs. Dr. Biddle stalked after him, and bending his wavering form over the sick man, like the ghost of Omar in Ossian, passed his rough digits over his sides and back. A moment elapsed, during which nothing was said, until, at an unconscious pressure of the hand of the former on his limb, the patient groaned.

“A broken leg!” ejaculated Dr. Diddle.

“An injury to the spine!” responded Dr. Biddle.

“An undoubted case for amputation!” continued Dr. Diddle.

“Internal injuries about the abdomen,—probable internal hemorrhage,—liver deranged,—patient old,—vis vitæ gone,—must die!” soliloquized Dr. Biddle;

never raising his long eye-lids, or recognizing the presence of any one but himself and patient in the room.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Dr. Diddle. "It is a clear case for amputating a limb, and the sooner it is done the better."

"It will do no good; the spine is injured, and the patient must die!" drawled Dr. Biddle.

"But I say you must remove the injured part, and give him a chance, ahem!" answered Dr. Diddle, scraping back his foot.

"It will only cause unnecessary suffering; and Buchan"—

"What the deuce do I care about Buchan, ahem! Amputate, or the patient will die,—ahem!" thundered Dr. Diddle.

"He'll die at any rate!" replied Biddle.

"I don't believe it!" says Diddle.

"You lie!" says Biddle.

"General principles,"—began Diddle, twisting his nose.

"My theory"—interrupted Biddle.

"*Your* theory! exclaimed Diddle.

But before he could finish the sentence, the patient, suffering the acutest pain, and disturbed by the vociferous dispute of the disagreeing surgeons, groaned aloud.

"Hush up! hush up!" cried the old wife, who was sweeping the dust into the fire, and who had not be-

fore spoken, "Hush up, John, I tell ye! Ye might have known ye'd broken your neck, getting on to that cursed *Loco Foco*!"

"How's that! how's that, good woman!" cried Dr. Diddle, whisking round his short figure, and looking stern at the speaker; for the Doctor could bear no joke on politics.

"I say, sir," rejoined the woman, "that the loco-focusses ruin the country. They've almost killed my poor old husband there on the bed, and they'll destroy every body afore they get through with it. We're almost *town paupers* now, and I'm sure I don't know what we are going to do!"

"You are laboring under a mistake, good woman, ahem!" answered Dr. Diddle, greatly excited. "It was the *locomotive*, ahem! and not the *loco foco* that hurt your husband! You're wrong, ma'am! Ahem! I'm happy to say that your husband's always been a Democrat, ma'am! Ahem! I hope to cure him, ma'am! I do, ma'am! Ahem!"

"But you won't cut off his leg, I tell you now, loco focusses or no loco focusses! He can't hardly walk as it is, and a pretty figure he'd make, with one leg in the grave! No, no! Cure him if you can with your *salves* and your *intments*, but don't touch your knives to my husband!"

This put an end to the matter, for neither of the rival doctors chose to risk an assault from a mad woman; and though both of them departed without doing

any thing for the man, yet, through the treatment of a third physician, employed by the town, he finally got well, and lives this day to pronounce his *sacré* on all doctorses and loco focusses.

I have before remarked, that Dr. Biddle was an exceedingly slow man, never working himself into a hurry, let matters be ever so desperate, but taking all things with most admirable moderation. On the contrary, Dr. Diddle was always on hand, and ready to go at a moment's notice ; but too apt, perhaps, to repeat his visits, when the patient was out of danger ; so that the old ladies used to say, " that Dr. Biddle was good enough, if you ever got him ; and Dr. Diddle, if you ever got rid of him."

There was an old man living on the outskirts of our town, named Obadiah Burt, ycleped, for the sake of euphony, fat Dick ; a shrewd, fun-loving personage, very remarkable for nothing in person or manner, except a huge round stomach, which he was very fond of patting, and from which a pair of spindling legs ran off, like two pipe-stems from a Spitzenburg apple. One morning Mr. Burt's son was ill, and fearing it might be something serious, he went for the doctor. Dr. Biddle was just rising from bed, when Mr. Burt drove into the yard, and raising the window of his bed-room, inquired what was the matter.

" Good morning, Obadiah, what's the matter now, that brings you here so early ?" drawled out the doctor, his eyes fast shut, as if there were no daylight in the world.

"My boy's sick—Tom—you know Tom, doctor?" answered Mr. Burt, "and I want you to come right over and see him."

"Well, I'll be along as soon as I get my breakfast," replied the doctor.

"No, but I want you to come now, doctor," urged Mr. Burt, knowing well the dallying propensities of the doctor; "the boy's very ill. Come now, and take your breakfast over at our house."

"Well, well," answered the doctor, "you go on, Obadiah, and I'll be there presently;" and shutting the window, he went on with his dressing.

The day was raw and gusty; the snow was lying in heaps along the road and fences, and the doctor, feeling a touch of his old complaint, the rheumatism, made no unusual haste to expose himself to the out-of-door's air. He ate his breakfast, prepared his saddle-bags with fresh medicines, drew on his boot-stockings, coming high above the knees, ordered his horse to the door, and then, wrapping around him his close-textured dreadnought, and fortifying his stomach by a stiff tumbler of Stoughton, set out on his day's routine of visits. He had by no means forgotten the pressing morning call of Mr. Burt, but as several patients lay in his way thither, he called in upon them; so that, what with preparations to start from home in the first instance, and visits to make on one and another as he went along, it was long past noon when he rode up to Mr. Burt's gate.

Obadiah was walking leisurely on his piazza, his hands folded behind him, his chin resting upon his bosom, as if in the deepest thought, as the doctor stopped his horse.

"Well, Obadiah," said the doctor, preparing to dismount, "how's your son, how's Tom now?"

"He's dead, doctor—the boy's dead!" exclaimed Obadiah, in a woful tone.

"Dead!" exclaimed Dr. Diddle. "Dead! The boy dead! Why you surprise me, Mr. Burt! I'm amazed! Dead!!"

"Yes, doctor, he's dead!"

"Why—why didn't you tell me how sick he was, Mr. Burt! I'm sure I had no idea of this! You couldn't have mentioned how ill the boy was! I'm sure you couldn't! I'm shocked!"

"I did, doctor! I told you he was very sick, and you promised to come right over! But it's no matter now, he's *dead*!"

"I'm very sorry, Mr. Burt! I'm sure I didn't suspect the child was so bad! I'm utterly shocked! Indeed I am!" repeated Doctor Diddle, for the twentieth time, for he was a kind-hearted man, and really hurt at the sad effects of his tardiness on the life of the child.

Nothing could be done now, however, and he was turning to leave in a most melancholy mood, when Obadiah, bringing his hands round to his portly stomach, and looking very quizzically, sung out, "I say, doctor, don't feel too bad! The boy didn't die of

the disease he had when I called you; he got well of that! *He died of old age!*"

Dr. Biddle was no contemptible humorist; and his jokes, poor man! are still remembered by his townsmen, and repeated far oftener than his wonderful cures. At a social supper one evening, when all the family were present, and merriment and good humor had prevailed, Dr. Diddle who was somewhat of a proser over his cups, had wearied the company with a long story of a child, and patient of his, having been gazetted as dead in the county newspaper, two days before its decease took place. "What did they mean? How in Heaven's name could they know, two days beforehand, that the child would die?" "Well enough," says Dr. Biddle. "How so?" replied the other; "from the nature of the disease?" "No, no!" dryly responded Biddle, "but from the nature of the *physician!*"

As a rare instance among country practitioners, the doctor was a fine scholar; and to the advantages of a rare classical education, he had added, by unremitting study during his intervals of leisure, a good knowledge of several modern languages. Our old clergyman was a great stickler for antiquity, a regular moth in every particle of musty lore on which he could lay his hands; and as familiar with the black-letter folios of every library in New England, as he was with his children's faces. He was said to have been, and I doubt not with truth, one of the best biblical scholars of his day;

for the black folio polyglot, that laid upon his table, was to him a daily and constant companion. Between the doctor and himself high disputes used to arise about the comparative merit of different languages, each claiming for those with which he was most familiar a decided superiority, and each

“By apostolic blows and knocks,
Did show his doctrine orthodox.”

The doctor of divinity was one evening arguing for the excellence of the Hebrew tongue, and endeavoring to establish that it was not only the most ancient, but also the most perfect of all languages, modern or ancient. The doctor of medicine argued as stoutly for his favorite Italian, and scouted the divine's notions about Hebrew, Arabic, Sanscrit, and all that, as musty and out of date. “Well, laugh as you please, doctor,” said the kind-tempered old man, “you can't deny, that when God Almighty thrust Adam out of Paradise, he spake Hebrew.”

“That may be ;” rejoined the doctor, “but if God spoke Hebrew when Adam was ejected, I am sure Eve spoke Italian when Adam was seduced.”

The life of a physician in the country is one of never-ceasing wear both to mind and body. There is a constant friction on the power of life, a never-ceasing endurance demanded of the mental and physical systems, to which few constitutions are adequate. Now and then you may meet a grey-headed doctor, one of those

iron-nerved men whom nothing seems to affect; whose rugged frame, and deep-bronzed face, throw defiance at disease, and who, like Sinbad's old man, have clasped their legs so strongly about the neck of Father Time, that he cannot throw them off. But these cases are rare ones. Physicians in the country usually die in middle age; and while, of the population around them, nearly seven hundred in a thousand reach to threescore years, scarcely half that number of their profession ever arrive at forty-five.

No one who is familiar with the kind of life their duties require them to lead will wonder at this. The breaking up of all the regular habits which induce long life; the exposure to wind, and sleet, and rain, by night and by day; the fording of swollen rivers, and crossing of mountains by blind foot-paths, in such weather as no one else would risk; the continual fatigues; the deprivation of rest, and irregularity of meals; the care and trouble of mind; the anxiety and fear of blame; the weighty responsibility they so often feel; the difficulty of guarding themselves in the early attacks of disease, and the foul air of contagion, from which they must never shrink; are sufficient to break down the strongest constitution, by sudden sickness or premature old age. It was only last winter that one of our physicians labored sixteen hours to get through the snow to a patient, at a distance of only five miles; and I have frequently been told by those in a good round of practice, that the coldest weather and the

most violent storms were sure, invariably, to bring them calls from the greatest distance. A pretty young girl from Barnstable, who had married a neighbor of mine, successfully established as a physician, had the curiosity to keep an account of the whole number of calls her husband had in the year ; and she told me, that out of the seven hundred and eighty-one she had registered, two hundred and sixty-six were in the night-time. Enough, one would think, to destroy the firmest health, or to discourage the most sleep-loving wife who ever clave to a husband.

In the good old-fashioned times, when the profession, unencroached upon by every smatterer in Latin, could cock up its head and look over its shoulders upon every rank in country society, except the clergy, every physician kept his body servant, "the doctor's man," as he was called, who was as necessary to the importance of the professional man as is the trowel to the mason, or the goose to the tailor. Old Doctor Morse, who died more than twenty years ago, and who was so well known in the central part of New Hampshire, was the last, whom I knew, of this old school of physicians ; and he kept up the custom, with religious scrupulosity, till the last. Jack, as the old man's man was called, was an honest, broad-brogued Scotchman, who had acted in his capacity for many years, and who was as much part and parcel of the doctor as the saddle-bags themselves. In the earlier part of his service he had been exclusively employed in attending the

doctor on his visits through the surrounding country ; but as buiness crept off from the good man in the same proportion as years crept on, Jack was employed about other matters ; and I remember him only as a servant of all work, riding with the doctor, to be sure, wherever he went, at a respectful distance behind, but, at other times, ploughing the land, milking the cows, churning the butter, and choring about for the good wife and her daughters.

“Jock,” said the old man to his servant, who had finished powdering the doctor’s wig, and was brushing up the three-cornered hat just taken from the blue box, under the secretary ; “Jock, you must saddle Black Tom and the pony immediately ; for I’ve just had a call to go over to Lovewell’s river, and you know the days are short, and there’s that vile pass, over Black Snout, before us.” Jack executed his master’s order with accuracy, if not with dispatch, and in half an hour, standing before the door, all wrapped in his gray frock and woollen cap, with a birch switch in one hand, and the other holding on to the stirrup, he helped the doctor to mount, and then followed after, on a gnarled, ugly little pony that nobody else could ride.

It was a bleak autumn day, and two long hours did the old man and Jack face the rough wind, before they arrived at the Black Snout, the pass which the doctor was not alone in dreading. The Snout was a high, hemlock covered peak of the Ossipee mountains, around which ran a small horse-path, veering inwards and out-

wards, upwards and downwards, right and left, as necessity or convenience had dictated, to the cattle, who first made it. On a pleasant summer's day it was a wearisome way to travel, hardly compensating the sight seen for the toilsome labor he had to undergo; but on a windy autumn morning, it was both fearful and dangerous. Far up, on one hand, towered cliff and rocky height, black as night with the dense growth of waving hemlocks, and seamed with the beds of streams and avalanches, which the fall rains had brought from the mountains; and far down, on the other, under steep precipices, and in deep glens, were large water-worn rocks, "tumbled," as the superstition said, "from the devil's apron, when he attempted to carry the mountain to dam up the lake." To go over it on horseback was out of the question, and so the master and man, alighting at the bottom, commenced on foot their perilous advance.

"This is a fearful place, Jock," said the old man, adjusting his hat and wig, so as to set a sudden squall, which came over the hills like a fall of water, at defiance, "and a hard time you and I think we have, in getting over it; but I remember the time—I was but a boy then—when Captain Lovell, with six hundred men, in the dead of winter, went over this same pass, after Paugus and his rascally Indians."

"Tak' ye tent o' your beast, sir," rejoined the wary menial, who was tugging, bridle in hand, to bring his obstinate pony to face the wind, that came harder and

faster through the narrow opening : “tak’ tent o’ Black Tam, or if he miss a fit, ye’ll be ganging the loup o’ the grey goose, into the deep loch there below.”

“My father,” continued the doctor—for the associations of his thoughts, when he began a story, were too strict to have it broken off by any ordinary danger—“you remember my father, Jock?—he was out in the expedition of sixty-six, an aid-de-camp of Captain Lovell ; and many a time has he told me, how the horses, as they passed the bend, in that cold winter’s day, shivered and drew back, one pushing the other, till the hindmost, with a rider on his back, went down the precipice, and both were lost in the pond.”

“An’ if ye dinna tak’ better care, baith you and Black Tam will be lost there, like those two pair feckless bodies, ere the cock screech the morn. Hauld ye the pony, sir, an’ I’ll tak’ Black Tam to manage.”

The doctor stopped, for the ascent had now become both difficult and dangerous for a man of his years ; and while Jack’s brawny form was pushing past him in the narrow path, a blast of wind, aided by the collision, took the hat and wig from the good man’s head, and sent them skirling down the precipice. “I tauld ye so—I tauld ye so !” was Jock’s exclamation, as the two essential articles of the doctor’s dignity went sweeping away in the wind. “I tauld ye so, but ye would na tak’ heed, an’ ye’ll be ganging yoursel’, like the piemaws o’er the loch yonder, dangling in the air, heels over head, and nae streaking or winding o’ your dead

corpse, by frien' or foe, if ye dinna min' telling your lang stories about your forbears."

Nothing was to be done, however, but for Jock to descend by a side path into the ravine, and recover the lost apparel, while the doctor held the horses. Fixing his own cap upon the bald head of his shivering master, Jock descended, and in a few minutes brought back the hat and the wig; the hat soiled and torn, the wig drenched and dripping from the water of the pond. By dint of squeezing and ringing, he at length succeeded in getting it into a fit state for the doctor's head, though sorely bereft of its comely appearance. "This is not my wig, Jock," muttered the somewhat disconcerted owner, fingering the dangling locks of his well-known head-gear, "this is not my wig, I tell you, Jock! it can't be!"

"An' wha's wig may it be, then, think ye?" retorted Jack, somewhat hastily and snappishly. "I wot weel there's no wale o' wigs in the Loch o' Win-nepissaukee."

Among the great numbers who crowd the medical profession in the country, it can hardly happen that many are not ignorant of the true principles of the healing art; but I do not believe them a larger proportion than in the city. Quackery and mal-practice exist everywhere; and that man's stream of knowledge, who dips his fingers in eau-de-cologne, before he touches my lady's wrist, is as likely to flow in a shallow channel, as his whose huge black paw grasps it with

a bruin's grip. Some men, like corporations, have no souls; or souls so small, that, like the Welshman's, they can ride to heaven on the backs of mites. Such men are always to be found in the medical profession; and that they are, is a sufficient reason, why the system of medical education should be changed, or the standard of medical knowledge raised.

I was once out on a surveying trip, among some of the back settlements of Vermont. One night, belated and cold, I found lodgings in the small hut of a backwoodsman, whose wife was ill of a severe and protracted attack of hemorrhage at the lungs. The kind people treated me with every attention in their power, and in return I ventured to prescribe some preventives and rules of diet to the sick woman. While I was talking, the physician, under whose care she had recently put herself, entered the room, his vials and gallipots rattling in his saddle-bags in a most formidable manner; and as I did not choose to dispute with a man six inches taller than myself, (albeit believing what my lord keeper Bacon said to king James, when asked what he thought of the French ambassador: "Sir, tall men are like high houses of four or five stories, wherein the uppermost room is commonly worst furnished,")—nor to affront him, I became silent at once. He did not deign to take off his hat, but advanced to his patient, and shook hands, saying, "How d'ye do, my good lady; how d'ye do?"

"Oh, doctor," cried the patient, you've come at last!

I'm so glad ! for I've been *despot* bad, and don't calculate on ever getting *smart* again."

"Pugh ! pugh !" returned the doctor, "you look a thundering sight better than you did last week !"

"Better !" exclaimed the woman, "no ! I'm no better, doctor ! Such pains and *ager* fits, as I had all night, make me feel slim enough this morning. Hain't you got something that'll cure these *ager* fits, doctor ?"

"To be sure I have ; I'll cure 'em up in no time for you. You've got the *hipo* this morning ! Never be discouraged, and I'll bet a pint of whisky, I'll *raise* you *smart* in a fortnight."

Here the husband came in,—a stout plain-spoken man, and advancing to the physician, said, "Good morning, doctor, what's the word ? How's your folks ?"

"All well, I thank you," returned the doctor.

"Well now, doctor, how do you find this woman ?" continued the husband. "Pretty bad, I guess. She's been moaning and groaning all night, and taking on so about her ailments, that we didn't one of us sleep a wink. What's the trouble ? Do you know ? Because if you don't, you'd better say so right out, and done with it. Are you up to the natur' of her ailments ? Can you cure her ?"

"To be sure I can," answered the doctor ; "I've just been telling her, as how she frets too much. She needn't be scared, for I can cure her."

"Well, ⁵what's the natur' of her complaints, then?" inquired the husband.

"Oh, it's as plain as daylight," answered the doctor. "Look here, now: it is a complaint arising entirely from obstruction and constitutional idiosyncrasy, and is situated under the muscular fascia. Some casual excitement has increased the action of the absorvent vessels, so much, that they have superinduced the blood from the intermittents, and occasioned monstrous debilitation."

"Well now, doctor," cried the husband, you talk like a lawyer, and I guess you're up to the natur' of the disease. None of your humbuggery for me! I want everything plain, like this! No man can go to deceive me, and see clear!"

The doctor now opened his saddle-bags, set out the medicines, took an empty phial, filled it from half a dozen others, and gave it with directions to the husband.

"So you're sure, I shall get about again, doctor?" said the sick woman, as he left.

"Sure? yes, sartain as can be, you'll be well in a week!"

And yet the woman died, as I expected, and as the doctor ought to have known she would, in less than the promised week.

But besides the regular practitioner, who covers all his ignorance and mal-practice under the broad shelter of a Latin diploma, which all the dictionaries in the

Vatican would never enable him to read, there are others who, without the factitious aid of legislative protection, become well known and popular in the healing art, for many miles around; men, who affect to despise the fine feathers of their brother daws, and who take every opportunity to pluck the faculty-borrowed plumage from their shivering backs.

Among these, the "Root Doctor" stands pre-eminent, who, discarding all mineral medicines as destructive to the vital principle, gathers from mountain and forest, green field and lowland, the wherewithal to heal the sick, and invigorate the feeble. Sage, wormwood, savory, sweet marjoram, saffron, and poppy leaves, from the garden; gold-thread, saxifrage, sweet-flag, liverwort, sassafras, and hydranger from the meadows; thistles, holly-leaves, pine-cones, walnut shells, campanulas, fraxinella, and rosemary from the forest, besides thyme, mint, balm, foxglove, anise-seed, gilly-flower, cowslips, marygold, blue violet, red rose-buds and a host of others,

" Whose latin names as fast he rattles,
As A, B, C."

make up a *materia medica*, which no man can either gainsay or resist.

If you will believe him, no pain is so acute that he cannot relieve, no disease so violent that he cannot cure it; and transmuting his simples to decoctions,—his decoctions to salts, he becomes a healing Elisha to all

the streams of life around him, which send forth bitter waters.

There is also the "Type Doctor," who believes that nature produces specifics for every malady of the human frame, and that upon each she has imprinted a signature corresponding to its peculiar virtues. This type or signature is supposed to have some resemblance to that part of the frame for which its remedial uses are intended, and none are used, save those which are plainly designed, by the finger-mark of Providence, for the parts affected. The kernel of the walnut, for instance, is used for diseases of the brain, the prickles of holly leaves for the pleurisy, kidney beans for nephritick complaints, and yellow lilacs for the jaundice.

The "Steam Doctor," too, is here, driving as he should, up hill and down dale, with locomotive speed; and infusing, with red pepper and lobelia, such action into the wheels of the human mechanism, that go they must, or the spring of life will break; and the "Patent medicine Doctor," whose specifics reach every infirmity, and so invigorate the constitution, that, in this physical redemption, each patient, like the patriarchs, shall live out the number of his days, and then fall asleep; and finally, the "Bone Setter," the man of miracles, whose skill, a gift of heaven; whose knowledge, gained in youth from the broken legs in the poultry yard, surpasses all education, defies all art.

Above all these, however, as above all else in this mundane sphere, must be ranked the "King's Evil Doc-

tor," who yet lives and finds believers, in the country towns of New England. Unlike all others of the medicinal art, he never goes from home, nor receives compensation, except in the form of presents, for his marvellous cures. Among the pleasant hills of Chester, not far from where Lake Massabesick sleeps so quietly in its beautiful basin, there may still be found, in a low, moss-roofed cottage, the arch physician of the scrofula. He is a genuine "Seventh Son of a Seventh Son," no daughter intervening to break the magic chain, and though now past sixty-five years in age, still practises for the benefit of the believing ones. His process of operating upon his patients is simple enough, consisting only of a series of manipulations for several successive days upon the neck and chest,—a system of rules for the diet of the patient,—and a piece of money suspended around the neck, to be constantly worn through life. Strange as it may seem, thousands of persons, within the last ten years, have been the dupes of this miserable pretender, and at this very day, intelligent people from the country around will bring their children to him, to be touched for scrofulous complaints.

Thus much, then, for the medicinal art in the country. There, as everywhere else, human sufferings and human credulity afford to quacks and ignorant impostors a never-failing harvest. Still, the science of medicine, founded on the broad principles of truth, is fast gaining ground; the standard of education among the

profession is rising ; legislation is protecting the community from the evils of empiricism ; a knowledge of physiology is obtaining among every class, and the day cannot be far distant, when both merit and ignorance, in this most important art to man's weal in this world, will meet their own reward.

THE VILLAGE.

And thus he described them by person and name,
They entered and dinner was served as they came.—WAVE RLY.

THE village of P—— is one of the prettiest in the Bay State. Many a traveller through Massachusetts remembers, when his journey is over, what a beautiful succession of neat and thrifty hamlets kept his attention alive, for hundreds of miles, through the thickly populated territory ; but, among them, he thinks of one as the finest and fairest of all, and forgets not, as his children cluster around him under the shade of a summer afternoon, or by the fireside of a winter evening, to tell them of the beauty and loveliness of the village, with the “tall elm tree.” In fact, the village of P—— is deserving of the universal notice it obtains ; and before the ‘Great Western Rail-Road came through the place, carrying on its back, like some fleet devil, the whole moving world, whether they will or not,—in those good old days, when the trot of the stage horse measured, with sun-dial correctness, its three miles and three quarters an hour, and the weary way was enlivened by many a cheerful story and stirring laugh,

the village was known and noticed by everybody. Its broad, shaded streets, through whose whole length there was not one dilapidated mansion ; its raised walls on either side with white-washed posts and rails ; its green and tasteful court yards ; its houses, and churches, and hotels ; its manufactories on the outskirts and its park in the centre ; all make it deservedly one of the most admired villages of New England.

But most noticed, and most admired, of everything in the village, was the old elm tree. This bore away the palm, and rightly. It stood, and still stands, in the very centre of the Park, which itself stands in the centre of the village, towering majestically far above every object around it, and seeming a mighty monarch among the beeches and maples, which, like a guard of yeomanry, are growing up all over the green. It is a forest-tree,—one of the old aboriginal growth when the town was settled, and in the mind of every native citizen, is associated with all the sunny hours and fairy visions of childhood. Beneath it the boys play their games of cricket and bass, and have played them an hundred years ; the swain whispers there his soft tale to the ruddy cheeked lass he loves ; the school-girls circle round it, in their soft-toned merriment ; fourth of July brings to it crowds of mimic, noise-loving heroes, whose shots, and bruises, and unceasing crackings, the old tree, dressed in gay pennons and waving flags, receives upon his rough sides, like a hearty, hale veteran, as he is. The grave go there to meditate, and the gay

to dance ; strangers stand and admire the broad base and erect trunk of the unmatched elm ; it is the hunting party's rendezvous to count their game ; the lawyer holds his petty court and the itinerant minstrel his gaping crowd beneath its broad branches ; while its deep shadows are alike sought, and alike grateful, to the youth and the man of eighty years.

The situation of the village is pleasant as one could wish. Standing in a valley, mid-way between the Hoosac and Tagkannuc ranges of hills, whose broad sides slope gradually down to the rich bottoms of the Housatonic—commanding an extensive prospect far to the north, where the hoary Saddle Mountain crowds all egress from the valley into a narrow defile,—and catching, from the south, faint glimpses of highlands, looming from the distant seaboard—surrounded by a fertile soil, over whose rolling surface well cultivated farms, fat pastures, and groves of maple and chestnut lie thickly scattered, and for the produce of which it affords a ready market, the village of P—— may boast of a situation, in respect to beauty, healthfulness and wealth, which can rarely be equalled, and is surely nowhere surpassed. From some points it commands a beauty of mountain scenery, to which I have nowhere seen a rival. The Hoosacs rise before the spectator, not with the sublime variety of rock and cliff which characterize mountains of the primary class, but huge, round headed, and distinctly defined against the sky, their broad bosoms, covered with the greenest herbage,

now swelling so beautifully round, now gently and softly depressed, that to the eye untired of gazing, they seem endowed with the motions of life. Below them, the streams slumber stagnant among reeds and willows, or brawl along beneath the shade of natural copsewood; are now hurried down declivities, and anon purl more leisurely through little lonely valleys, which, opening from time to time, seem to invite the stranger to explore their recesses.

The dwelling houses of the village are mostly of the same style of architecture; neat white buildings, with green venetians, and jessamined porticos, standing back from the street far enough for pretty court-yards well grown with shrubbery, and having tasteful and productive gardens running off in the rear. There are some, indeed, that rise ambitiously above the others, boasting another story, or a long piazza, or a more modern style; and others that, in their natural sites and well cultivated grounds, may vie in beauty with whatever you could name. On the old cantonment grounds, at one end of the street, is a flourishing female school, and while I now write, grass of the deepest green spreads over the smooth lawn before it, stretching far away to the east, like a rich carpet; the foliage of the trees and shrubbery is clean and soft, and shooting out in all luxuriance; the garden is tastefully laid out and redolent of beauty; and the "garniture of the fields" and mountains around, is glorious from the hand of the great Adorner. The birds make here their favorite re-

sort, and from earliest morning, till far towards noon-day,

“Thick around the woodland hymns arise.”

Three very grave old robins, with their respective ladies, make year after year their summer residences in the dense covered arbor, and though experienced in architecture, a pert little sparrow on an apple tree in the corner, vies with them every summer, in the beauty and tastefulness of his nest. A whole mob of plebeian chip-birds are every day hard at work in the rose bushes on the circular walks, taking little heed of anything, save an aristocratic oriole, who having finished his nest, on an overhanging bough of the elm tree, looks down upon them with a most lordly and provoking complacency. The workies in their brown homespun coats, seem to take this conduct in high dudgeon, and notwithstanding a three years' title, which the oriole can show, his golden coat and overbearing air have well nigh waked the little radicals into Heidelberg insurrection.

For scenes of rural peace and comfort, there are cottages and farm houses nearer or more remote, and the traveller marks them as they stand peacefully in hundreds over the town, making it beautiful through all its wide valleys and narrow glens. Now there is one by the hill side, to which a narrow path leads up, lowly, but seeming comfortable, and neatly arranged, where, on frosty mornings, you may see the thin blue smoke

ascend from the chimney, and wind slowly out from among the green trees ; its little garden, whose fruit trees and bushes are mingled with kitchen herbs ; its paddock hard by, where the cow and sheep are fed ; its yard, where the cock struts and crows and summons his family around him before the door, where the wood is neatly piled up for the winter's fuel, and where the old well-sweep bends over the fountain of purest water. Then another, its roof overrun with moss, and almost as green as the ground out of which its weather-stained walls appear to grow, and yet on a bright sunny day, when the moorland birds are singing their songs among the heather, or the lark, lured thither by some green wheat field for its undisturbed nest, rises singing over all the enlivened solitude, the little bleak cottage seems to smile the paradise of poetry.

The inhabitants of the village we have selected, from among the thousands spread all over the plains and hill sides of New England, compose an intelligent, thriving, and happy community. It is true there are sometimes here, as elsewhere in our world, dissensions and strifes, family clans and party feuds, to mar the usual quiet of its society. Busybodies come and go with foul tales of slander ; old ladies gossip of new comers, over their cups of black bohea ; saint-like, censorious maidens,

“ Whose withered features show
They might be young some forty years ago,”

watch with jealous eye over each amorous couple they may chance to discover, and report their doings at the weekly meeting of the Moral Reform Auxiliary; and grandmamas in breeches amuse grandmamas in petticoats, with the naughty doings of neighbors and kindred around. But these are spots only on a surface of almost unvaried brightness,—tares among the wheat,—which may disturb, but do not destroy, the harmony of the village population.

In fact, good nature, kindness of feeling, contentment, and charity to the faults and failings of others, characterize, in general, the whole community. Political asperities cause no disturbance, sectarian partialities no breach, in the social relations of the neighborhood. The dapper democrat and grandiloquent whig walk side by side in gracious amity; the Baptist holds no communion of love close from his unimmersed neighbor, nor does the Episcopalian eject from the church of his heart's fellowship, Presbyterian or Methodist, Unitarian or Deist. Whatever may be the political or religious faith of each citizen of the village—however strenuously he may urge it, however heroically he may fight for it, in the public arena, the casque is doffed, the armour laid aside, on the threshold of private life; and another proof is afforded to the lovers of the species, that men's hearts are better than their creeds.

I attribute all this, in a great measure, to the influence, which some of our best citizens exerted, for many

years, over the town. They were its fathers, good men,—men of kind hearts and sound discretion, who gave the impress of their characters upon the age and generation they have left. A few of them, indeed, are still living, but the most are past this life, to enter into the enjoyment of a better.

There was one, whose name no lover of his race can ever cease to venerate, and whose memory is honored now with laurels as green as though he had just passed away. I mean old Col. D——. With a sound and careful mind, united to an integrity as firm as the hills among which he was reared, the Colonel lived and died an honest man. He was universally kind and complaisant to all he met, proffering the warmth of a pure heart to real worth, in whatever garb it came before him ; but stern, retiring, and cold as a Norwegian iceberg, to those who had shown the slightest dereliction from moral principle. Born in the midst of the dissensions which first began to disaffect the colonists to the mother country, nurtured among those noble spirits whose zeal and eloquence kindled the flame of liberty in the hearts of the yeomanry of New England, serving honorably as an officer in the war of the Revolution, and supporting from the first the administration of the father of his country, till he quitted public life for ever, the old Colonel was, as may well be supposed, a noble specimen of those times that tried men's souls. For more than forty years he held the office of Postmaster in the village, the perquisites of

which, united to his pension, gave him a competence during all his life. How well I remember the veteran, as he daily passed with the regularity of the sun, from the office to his meals, and back again in just such lapse of time ; his thin tall form bent downwards by age, and his step tremulous and unsteady, yet bearing about him such evidences of remaining vigor, such relics of a martial air, that he at once attracted the notice of every stranger. He has gone from the stage of this life where his part was well acted ; and of no man could it ever have been said with more reason,

“ This truth he proved in every path he trod,
An honest man 's the noblest work of God.”

Hard by the green turf that lies lightly on the old soldier, sleeps another, whose influence over our town's people was strongly felt, and the loss of it deeply mourned. The Sheriff, as we called him from the office he held honorably and gracefully for many years, was in all respects a perfect gentleman. No man's life ever gave such lessons upon the practicability of true Christianity, in the discharge of every duty. Holding religion to be a virtue as well as a creed, he proved in all his actions, that it might be dignified with the efficient officer, courtly with the polished gentleman. His perfect good breeding was nowhere more fully shown, than in his treatment of females, of whatever rank in life. I have seen him stand, gracefully listening to the importunities of some poor suffering woman, with all the

attention he could have given to the noblest suppliant, and the granting of the favor was in such unforced civility, as neither to embarrass her in the acceptance, nor himself in the offer of it. He was a man of fair mental endowments, and possessed a wit that never failed him, and a suavity of temper that could never be ruffled. In the discharge of the duties of his office, severe, vexatious, and harassing as they oftentimes necessarily were to those with whom the law brought him in contact, he never made an enemy, nor lost a friend.

Our landlord, too—the merry hearted, generous host—the convivial, tireless companion—the upright, honorable man—did no little in making good nature a characteristic of our village. His knowledge of mankind, his social virtues, his tact, his love of company, and his extraordinary powers of amusing a fireside circle by lively anecdote and pleasant gossip, all most admirably fitted him for the station he filled, and made him a choice companion for every wayfaring guest. There was a constant flow of good humor, and a playful wit, easy and of high relish, without any ambition to shine, the natural fruit of his lively fancy, his sober good sense, and his cheerful temper, that gave his conversation an unspeakable charm, alike suited to the humblest or the most elevated circle.

Nor must I forget good Deacon B——, the spiritual father of our Israel! He was the conservator of the church, the keeper of the flock, the shepherd of the

little ones, the right hand man of the pastor. Good old Deacon B——, light lie the earth upon his ashes ! Methinks I see him now, his gray head raised above the people at the evening conference, his trembling hands folded before him, pleading earnestly with his God for spiritual blessings to descend on the Zion he so dearly loved. He lived for Christ, and died as he had lived. On the day of his death, as he sat calm, unmoved, cheerful, smoking his pipe, and dwelling on the goodness of his Savior, his constant theme, his daughter said, "What message shall I give to the children, father, when I see them ?"

"Tell them," said the good old saint, "in the words of my blessed Master, that having loved my own that are in the world, I have loved them unto the end." And so, full of days, peaceful, trusting, he went to his grave, as a shock of corn fully ripe cometh in, in its season.

But there are others whom I would not forget, and who, though they did not contribute in so great a degree to form the manners and character of the present inhabitants of our village, are yet deserving of notice, as having been no mean actors in their day, in the humble drama of our town.

Foremost among these, stands the first pastor of our town, the stanch defender of his country's rights, the courageous repeller of his country's wrongs,—the veteran democrat, the upright man, and consistent Christian,—old parson A——. With a manly and graceful

person, united to a winning and complaisant manner ; with a vigorous physical constitution that time itself seemed scarcely able to impair, and an active, independent mind, that no adverse circumstance could depress ; he served his country and his God with an earnest and loving heart for three score years and ten, and then departed to his reward on high. Although thirty years have dilapidated the tomb where the good man's ashes sleep, there are those still alive, who remember the unflinching courage with which he advocated his principles in his pulpit and his life, despite of angry opposition and stern defiance. Whether he were right or wrong, we undertake not to say ; but thus much no one will deny, that what he believed he taught, and what he thought he acted, with the heroic bravery of a reformer. His early interest in behalf of the struggling colonists for their independence, and his own active exertions in the good cause, will not be soon forgotten. He marched with the recruits, who hastily enlisted when Burgoyne was on his rapid march from the Canadas, encouraged them by his eloquence and example, cheerfully endured their fatigues and hardships as a common soldier, and took an active part in that engagement, which brought such glory to the American arms. It is related of him, that on arriving in sight of the British army, with his characteristic enthusiasm and fearlessness of danger, he mounted a stump and called out with his stentorian voice, " In the name of God and the Continental Congress, I command you to lay down

your arms." A hundred balls came whistling at once through the air around the veteran, who, waving his hand with undaunted defiance, quietly dismounted from his dangerous position, and fell back into the lines.

Many years are now elapsed, since the long funeral processions attended to the grave two of the first settlers of our town. In all respects they furnished to each other the most remarkable contrasts. The one was tall, erect, stately. In personal appearance few persons of his years ever surpassed him. He threw about himself an air of Spanish loftiness. He looked, and spoke, and moved, an old Castilian. The other, though not below the middle stature, was still no match in appearance or manners, for his contemporary. Quiet, reserved, methodical, careful of his own rights, and respectful of those of others; honest, though a lawyer; impartial, though a justice; temperate, though a politician, he held a place in the hearts of men, which few are ever able to obtain. The one was lordly and commanding, profuse in his hospitality, elegant in his entertainments, ambitious in his aspirings. The other, mild but firm, social but dignified, complaisant, but unyielding as a rock to the solicitations of the dishonest. Each was fond of wealth, eagerly grasping for it with earnest soul, and each obtained it; one by honest savings, the other by financial gains. One wrote with the same pen he had used for fifteen years; the other lavished thousands on his person, his equipage, and his mansion. Both exerted great influence in their day,

counter and diverse indeed, but which may still be distinctly seen, in the habits of thought, the manner of life, and the character of the whole village.

In a corner of the churchyard, beneath a modest stone, that faintly tells his virtues and omits his faults, as tomb stones should, lie the mortal remains of Richard Rowland Rawdon, to whom the sobriquet of Uncle Grumbleton was appended, for many years before his death. No matter what he was, or what he did by way of livelihood, to sustain animation in that tall, gaunt, great-coated figure, about the height of a work-house pump, that stood morning, and evening, and noonday, by the post, on the corner of South street, shaking its head, and uttering lugubrious wails. It is enough to know, that no man ever so fully felt "what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue."

"Wrong, sir, every thing wrong. America of 1825 is no more like the America of olden time, than I am like Louis the Fourteenth—ruined, sir—every class suffering, sir—miserable administration, sir—it's all ruin ! ruin !! ruin !!! But is this all ? *Oh no !*"

"But things are much cheaper !"

"Much cheaper ! Yes, sir ; but what's the good of things being cheap, when nobody has any money to purchase with ? They might just as well be dear. But is that all ? *Oh, no !*"

The *Oh, no !* pronounced in a lugubrious note, while he dropped his chin upon his hands, would gain the

attention of the passer-by, and Uncle Grumbleton would proceed :—

“ I never grumble—I hate grumblers : I never talk of politics—I hate politics : but is it not true, that this administration is fast plunging the country into ruin ? The old and safe order of things is all overturned, the currency is deranged, the exchanges are high, the foreign relations are precarious, and it’s all ruin ! ruin !! ruin !!! But is this all ? *Oh, no !* The president is the head of a party, and not of the people—the elections have gone by fraud, and corruption, and bribery, and falsehood—the sword and the purse are united—Congress is made up of a set of ignorant, swaggering blackguards—the democrats have got the day, and it’s all ruin ! ruin !! ruin !!! But is this all. *Oh, no !*”

“ What else is there, Uncle Grumbleton ?” would ask some bystander.

“ Else ? Enough else !—Don’t call me Grumbleton, you ignorant, impudent, overbearing little reprobate ! I never grumble. I hate grumblers. What else is there, did you ask ? Enough else. The seasons are all changed, the heavens give no more rain, the winds are cold, the wheat is all mildewed, the corn is parched up, the ground is like powder, there is no fruit on the trees, the hay has come in not half a crop, there will be a famine, and it’s all ruin ! ruin !! ruin !!! And is this all ? *Oh, no !* The lawyers are all rogues—the poor people are all plucked—the rich men are all extortioners—the doctors are all quacks—the merchants

are all bankrupts—the priests are all knaves—the manufacturers are all cheats—and it's all ruin! ruin!! ruin!!! And is this all? *Oh, no!"*

And thus the old man would go on, and did go on, day after day, till death took him, it is to be hoped, to a warmer clime, and a better administration.

There is one spirit more which I would summon from the "vasty deep" of the past, if he would but come "when I do call for him." Shade of old Storer, I invoke thee! Thy lands are divided and parcelled out among innumerable heirs, "no child of thine succeeding;" thy strong box has been rifled; thy notes and bonds, thy deeds and mortgages, all cancelled; thy stocks sold; thy very wardrobe, so dear to thy heart for long years, crowded in the rag-man's bag, unhonored, unlamented! It irks me to think, that, stript of thy snuff-brown coat, thy white, indented hat, thy patched breeches, and thrice-darned hose, thou shouldst ferry over, a poor forked shape, in leaky, Stygian wherry! Come back, thou type of graceful covetousness—thou embodiment of soft-toned parsimony—thou realization of good-natured sordidness! Come back, and since thou didst ever feed the hungry—for gold; and clothe the naked—for silver; and distribute far and wide thy wealth—for ten per cent. on bond and mortgage; so now, with thy too complaisant smile, thy too winning brow,

"Go with my book, take off the critic's curse,
And bring back dollars to the author's purse!"

Old Joseph Storer was a hoarder, rather than a miser ; or, if a miser, none of the mad Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. I knew him only in his old age, and the decay of his faculties,

“ A remnant most forlorn of what he was,”

hastening to the last sad stage of human weakness ; yet even then his eye would light up on the mention of some new sources of wealth, and his ready smile greet the needy borrower who sought relief at his hand. As he had no children, nor relatives towards whom he had ever shown much of affection, it had been long hoped, that, at death, he might leave a large bequest, if not the bulk of his property, to a Medical College in the village. When the thing was suggested to him, he always received it favorably, with that most gracious, non-committal air that neither denied nor granted ; but towards the close of his life, he more than once intimated his intention to make his will in favor of the College. The old man's parsimony, however, would never suffer him to execute the writing, even though it could never have affected his property so long as he lived ; and at his death, his lands, and houses, and notes, and all his hoarded wealth, fell to those whom he loved not. “ Tell me,” said he to his physician, who was urging him, only the day before he died, to make his will, lest he should drop off before he knew

it, "tell me when you think I'm going to die, and *we will write fast !*"

For a man who was utterly ignorant of every thing that belongs to the forms of life, and whose dress was that of the meanest day-laborer, he had more art of address, more fascination of manner, than any person I ever saw. He was never shy, never abashed ; nor did he ever manifest anything like *mauvais honte*, in whatever company he might be found. Calling one evening, on a matter of business, at the residence of the late Mrs. Dexter, in Boston, he found a large party assembled, and being very politely requested to stay, did so. During the evening he was introduced to several gentlemen of distinction, was made acquainted with several ladies, was frequently addressed by the dignified and elegant hostess, and seemed to enjoy the whole affair greatly. After every one of the guests had left, Storer walked up very gravely to Mrs. Dexter, who was reposing in her arm-chair from the weariness of the evening, and bowing with all his grace, said,

"Madam, I have enjoyed very much your elegant entertainment this evening, and I am enraptured with the beauty of the ladies who have been here, and the civility of the gentlemen ; and now, madam," taking a large leathern purse from his pocket, "*If you tell me what is the damage, I shall be most happy to pay you.*"

There are many anecdotes told of his courtship of his after wife, his marriage with whom was the com-

mencement of the good fortune in the world's gear, which ever afterwards attended him. She was a rich widow of an officer in the British army, many years the senior of Storer, and it was of the fertile soil, and broad acres of the farm on which he labored in her employment, that he first became enamored. It seems the good lady, during the progress of the courtship, either doubting the sincerity of the young man's attachment, or distrusting its disinterestedness, mentioned her fears to him one evening, while they were walking abroad in the fields, and entreated him to tell her the truth.

"Not love you, my dear!" said Storer, "not love you! *Why I love the very ground you tread upon!*"

The fervor of the devoted swain did not go unrewarded, and in a few weeks after he became the proprietor, in fee simple, both of the widow and her lands. The union, however, was by no means a happy one, and numerous were the ways, as rumor says, which the young husband tried to rid himself, in his own phrase, "of the live stock that saddled the estate." He put her upon a race-horse to go to church, from the back of which she was thrown and nearly killed; he left a board loose upon the cistern, and when she had fallen in, was seized with so sudden a cramp, that he could not go to her relief; nor was it until her cries alarmed the neighborhood, that she was rescued from the imminent danger of her situation. Indeed, so sad a time did the good woman have with her youthful partner,

so niggardly was he of her allowances, so penurious of her patrimony, that she purchased from her own savings a shroud, and a gravestone, lest his avarice should deprive her of even these last solaces of female vanity. These she kept by her for many years, the one ready fitted, the other engraved, with a blank left for inserting the time of her decease ; styling herself the relic of her former husband, and carefully omitting all allusion to her last marriage. Instead however, of carrying out the good woman's intentions, Storer inserted the odious fact of her connection with himself, and crowded in, at the bottom of the stone, the time of her birth and death. The fact is so singular, and withal so curious, that we cannot forbear transcribing, verbatim, the inscription on the tombstone.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
 MADAME HANNAH W——
 SECOND CONSORT OF THE
 HONORABLE WILLIAM W,——ESQ.
 AND FIRST WIFE OF
 JOSEPH STORER, ESQ.

Youth gladdens and smiles in prospects bright,
 Middle age is doomed to care and toil,
 Old age the lonely eve of night,
 Sudden death writes vanity on all.
 Death is the crown of life,
 Were death denied poor man would live in vain,
 Death wounds to cure, we fall, we rise, we reign,
 Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,
 Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres,
 Death gives us more than was in Eden lost,
 This king of terrors is the Prince of Peace.

Were I so tall as to reach the pole,
 Or grasp the ocean with a span,
 I must be measured by my soul,
 The mind's the standard of the man.

Born August 10th ; Anno Domini —

Died September 22d ; Anno Domini —

She was by all accounts a simple hearted woman, no match in domestic differences for the overbearing tyranny of her husband, and ever careful of the disposition of her remains, after she should de cease. "Promise me," said she one day to a lady, whose reputation for ready wit, no less than her abundant charities, will make her long remembered in the neighborhood, and who always playfully saluted her as Mrs. Prink—"Promise me, that you will see me decently buried, when I am dead."

"Yes, I will," answered the lady, 'I promise you *I will,—six feet deep,—face downward—so that you shan't scratch out,—and your Epitaph shall be,*

Here in this Sink,
 Lies Musty Prink !"

After all, though there were many who hated the old miser, it was not so easy to despise him. Of everything that was to benefit himself he was acute in

his perceptions, clear in his course of reasoning ; but stupid as the veriest ass's colt, in all that made for his injury. One who did not know him, would have been out of all patience with the slowness of his apprehension. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little with a painful process, until it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its richest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have the power to keep back their pulsation, and it was not until he found that he must understand you, that the glimmer of understanding, which faintly came from his eye, communicated to the rest of his long cadaverous face.

Nor was he always a miser. By taking care of the pence he was often enabled to part with the pounds upon a scale that left other men, esteemed liberal and generous, halting at an immeasurable distance behind. As instances of this, he gave at one time an organ to the church ; at another, a clock to the town. Of this last gift he was deservedly proud, and never awearied of listening to laudations of his munificence, as a public benefactor. In fact, it was the theme of the old man's self-gratulation to the last hour of his life.

"Can you tell me, sir, was his frequent inquiry of a stranger, who might be passing the park, "Can you tell me, sir, what the purport of that inscription is, on the clock yonder?"

The stranger looks up and reads, in large gilt let-

ters, upon the dial—"Presented to the town by Joseph Storer, Esq."

"Ah, yes, yes!" the old man would reply, "I remember now: munificent donation that, sir! Great public benefactor that Esquire Storer! Yes, yes!"

"Who is he, sir?"

"That, Esquire Storer, eh? A gentleman living near by, sir! a man of great wealth, sir! Munificent donation that, sir!" And the old man would pass away, satisfied that another stranger had heard of the generous act of the old miser.

Among others whom it would weary the reader to enumerate, and who have passed to their long home, was one, a frequent visitant at our village, and whose ashes, though they slumber not in our church-yard, are yet honored as those of a noble and holy man. I refer to Dr. H. Perhaps his influence over the town was scarcely less than that of our own clergyman, so long had he lived, and so well was he known in the country, as a man of the purest heart, of the most blameless life. There was something of placid dignity in his aspect; of a politeness, not of form, but of sentiment in his manner; of a mildness, undebased by flattery, in his conversation. His look had something above the cares, but not the charities of this world; and over a cast of seriousness, and perhaps melancholy, that seemed to be reserved for himself, there was an easy cheerfulness, and now and then a gaiety, that spoke to the innocent pleasures of life a language of kindness and indulgence.

Dr. H. was, perhaps, as pure a personation of benevolence as ever existed. There was within him that divine sympathy for all around him, that brings man, in what man can alone emulate the angels, so near to his Creator. But with all this goodness of soul, there was nothing approaching to weakness, or even misjudging softness ; but he had seen, he had known, and he had struggled with the world—and this, without doubt, was one great secret of his influence as a clergyman.

“ And when he left his humble heritage,
It was with no wild strain, no violence ;
But, wafted by a comely angel’s breath,
He went from time, and on immortal sails
Wore the rich dawn of an eternity.”

It is to the influence which men such as these have exerted upon our community, that many of its characteristic customs, its habits of thought and life, are to be traced. With a little careful attention you may mark them everywhere, over the whole surface of our society, coloring it of some peculiar hue, as the brooks which cross the meadows, spreading out, as they advance into numberless branches, and lost to the eye, are seen only by the deeper shades of green which they give to the luxuriant herbage.

More than in every thing else, this influence is observable in strong attachments to old customs and pursuits, which are apparent at every corner of the village. Novelties are introduced with great difficulty upon our old stock. You may ingraft them, and furnish them

every care necessary to life, but they will not flourish. The whole world may be on fire with some new project, but it disturbs not the cold, old-fashioned calculations of our quiet folk. In the speculations of '34, '35, and '36, not a man could be induced to invest a copper in western lands; and though the trumpet was blown upon our hills, and the fair fields of the promised land were spread out before our view, the old heads looked grave, shook their queues, called it foolish, and went home to dinner.

Nor do new discoveries relating to literary, or scientific, or political, or religious matters, find any more encouragement. We have literary and religious men enough, men of high culture and deep research, as our pulpit and our bar can testify—we have too, as what place has not, political men—but they are old birds, wary and far-sighted, whom the chaff does not tempt. Phrenology may thrive elsewhere, even to the over-spreading of the land, but it will not grow *here*. Mesmerism would not find a single grave listener in our whole population. Anti-masonry, in its huge stalking through the country, never dared show its front over our mountains; nor do one of the ultraisms of the present day find here a favorable sky, or a genial soil. Lectures, sermons, newspapers, circulars, letters, appeals, do no good; and the apostle of each new doctrine, as he tries in vain to move the flinty hearts of the people by his tales of woe, pronounces us skeptical, phlegmatic, stupid; and departing with mingled con-

tempt and anger, "shakes off the very dust from his feet," as a testimony against us.

And yet we are not one of these. The four congregations that worship in their respective churches on the Sabbath ; the stillness and solemnity of demeanor over the whole place during its sacred hours ; the family offering of praise to our common Father every morning and evening ; the faith in the Holy Scriptures which is firmly rooted in every soul ; the love of Nature, God's other volume, which dwells in so many pure hearts, and from which are read those great and holy truths, forming the character and influencing the life, for a better state of existence—are proofs enough, that neither stupidity, nor scepticism finds a lodgment here.

The daily life of a country village generally flows on, even and noiseless, in the tenor of its way. It is not, however, unvaried by stirring incidents, and regular anniversary seasons, which move and hasten its usually sluggish waters. Besides the civil and religious festivals of New England, which are observed with sacred and scrupulous exactness by the whole community, there are other days, which each season brings with it, that are devoted to relaxation and amusement. Added to the sleigh rides, and pic-nic gatherings, and bower parties, in which the ladies participate, there are other kinds of sport, exclusively for the young men. Among them, the annual hunting match, which takes place late in the autumn, holds a high rank. As soon as the cold fall rains are past, and the mild misty days

of Indian summer come gently up from the south, you may hear the woods resound on all sides with the barking of the dogs and the cracking of the rifles. These, however, are but the prelude to the great match, which is to come off on the first sharp frosty day. If there be a light fall of snow upon the ground, so much the better; for the scent will then lie, and the dogs go off with a sharper appetite for the game.

The morning breaks clear and bright over the mountain, the air cuts sharply as you start off towards the north woods, and the white frost gathers around your eyelashes and whiskers, from the congealed puffs which the hasty walk brings quick and short from your panting chest. The members of the other side are already abroad, and the sharp crack of the rifle comes full and frequent upon the ear, from wood, and glen, and highland. You direct your own course towards the old Hoosac Mountains, and prepared for a long day's excursion, rejoice in the excitement which the exercise, the fresh morning air, the prospect before you, and the glorious scenery opening continually around, give to your already quickened and gladdened spirits.

The game promises to be plenty; and on days like this, when everything counts, from the squirrel to the lynx, from the chip-bird to the eagle, you let off your gun at everything which comes in your way. Nothing is to be despised, nothing to be thrown away; and your panniers are packed, as hunter's panniers never were before, with everything which will serve to tell on your side, at the assembling in the evening.

A certain house is appointed, at which the game is to be counted ; and as the time approaches, the different parties come in, lame and jaded, to the rendezvous. Wild fowls of every kind, ducks, plover, mallards, widgeons, teal, spoonbills, herons, cranes, bitterns, pheasants, partridges, grouse, quail, pigeons, woodpeckers, crows, gulls, owls, and an infinite number of non-descripts, lie in piles before the talesman. Game of every description ; red, striped, and gray squirrels ; racoons, hares, musquashes, weasels, marmots, hedgehogs, and foxes, come in each for their respective tally. The number that each individual of a species shall count is settled beforehand, so that no dispute can arise as to the respective number that each side have gained. Sometimes rarer animals are found, and the party that can show an eagle, or better still, those who have entrapped and shot a martin, are received with loud huzzas by their assembled brethren.

The losing side pay for the supper, of which all partake. The meal becomes usually a scene of merriment and hilarity, to which the toil of the day, and the events of the chase, give an intensity and exhilaration of spirit, unfelt on other occasions of festivity. The losers bear the jokes of the winners on their want of skill—the winners toast the most successful of their numbers with rapturous cheers ; the various incidents of the day are told, and discussed, and laughed at, all round the table ; the hits and misses, the good shots and poor shots, the chase and escape, the merits of a

pointer and the fine scent of a hound, keep conversation brisk for many an hour ; and last, and most glorious of all,

“ When sated hunger bids his brother thirst
Produce the mighty bowl,”

the catch, and song, and oft-repeated chorus, wind up the evening,—the glorious evening of the hunting match.

Another source of unfailing amusement to certain of our villagers is angling, although, unlike hunting, it never becomes a trial of skill in a public match. The angler goes alone ; company to him is always a bore ; and you will mark him steal quietly away across the fields, and far up over the hills, unattended, save by his dog, towards the brook that comes brawling down the mountain, for his favorite trout. As the poet's life never grows prosaic, so the angler never ceases to love the stream. As long as the heart beats and the pulse can be felt, however feeble, so long the fondness for angling survives in the blood ; and even when the hand has lost its cunning, sweet to the old man's ear is the murmur of the trout brook, and beautiful to his dim eyes is the breezy blue of its wrinkled surface.

There are many kinds of fishing practised in the ponds and streams that are found throughout the valley, and up the mountains, but with professed anglers trout fishing bears away the palm. Besides the superiority of the trout over all other fish for the table, the phy-

sical exercise necessary to follow up the stream, the excitement of the constant movements of the angler, the graceful and rapid dart of the fish to the bait, and above all, the skill, never to be made perfect, which is requisite to find the hole, to throw the line, and to secure the trout, give to this fishing a charm, which none other possesses.

There are not many trout streams in the country, more likely to afford a week's recreation to the true lover of this finest of all sports, than those upon our mountains; nor would it be an easy matter to point out a country, on the whole more interesting to the lover of nature. The angler may undoubtedly take large trouts among the Catskills, and from streams more secluded bring home a heavier crul; but for a week's fair fishing, the streams that render tribute from east to west to the Housatonic, he will find surpassed by none. The natural scenery on the banks of these streams is beautiful; and the waters, "clear as the diamond spark," present in their course every variety of smooth water, rapids, and pools for the exercise of the angler's skill.

Our mountain streams are also admirably planned to meet the angler's taste, almost every inch of water being accessible without danger or interruption. The banks are generally not naked and barren, not spongy and overgrown with rushes, nor yet crowded with close and impervious wood; but mostly dry and inviting, fringed in many parts with beech, maple and hemlock,

and in others overhung with the pleasant alder, among the roots of which is often harbored a goodly and well-grown trout, impatient for some dropping fly or incautious worm. Their development, too, is gradual as they flow on. They come not from large reservoirs, supplied scantily through their course, but commencing in modest and humble style, emerging from slender and silvery fountains, gain rivulet after rivulet, gently and unconsciously, far down to the valley through which they flow.

The scenery about them is beyond compare. Hundreds of waterfalls are scattered all along, for ever dining the woods; fairy dells, where the water eddies round in perennial beauty; green, soft glens, rolling their "banks o' bright bracken" down to the very edge; abrupt precipices, bare and cloven with huge seams and scars; high hills, covered with the densest forests, their trunks standing straight and unmoved in the storm as well as the sunshine; and most beautiful of all, the glimpses, through the opening umbrage, of the village, sleeping peacefully in the far off valley. The angler cares not for inns. His home is among the mountains, whether he wanders far in-land, or pitches his tent on the green hill side, above the rich farms spread out before him. He cares not where he sleeps, and his love is to bivouac in woods, under rocks, or on river sides, where he may commune with nature, in all her aspects.

It is no infrequent thing for our trout anglers to be

absent among the mountains for several days together, tracing the streams through their thousand windings, and plying their finest art, in luring from the deep holes and undisturbed haunts the old monarchs of the streams. In such cases, they trust to chance for food and lodging; and though sometimes falling in with the "sweet lavendered cottage" of old Isaac Walton, they more often meet ludicrous and uncomfortable adventures. A friend of mine, who was out on one of these excursions last summer, sent home to his good lady an epistle, so descriptive of angler's luck, that I cannot forbear giving it to the reader.

"I am seated this morning, just a quarter to five,
To tell you, dear wife, I'm scarcely alive,
For in truth, all the night, I've had sadly to do
With the *varmint*, which live in the beds of Peru;
I had scarce laid aside my fish-gear, and crept
Into sheets, where I'm sure half-a-dozen had slept;
And had just begun dozing, and dreaming away
Of trout, flies, three twisters, and jaunts of the day,—
When, by Jupiter Ammon, there came such a scout
Of mosquitoes and bed bugs, a rascally route,
And on legs, arms, and stomach, committed such revels,
As nothing could equal, not St. Tony's devils;
For they came in platoons, and to left, and to right,
They wheeled, like old soldiers, all fresh for the fight,
Unyielding, unflinching, and though with the best
Of soldier-like tactics I ever possessed,—
Though a pillow, in place of a sword, I did wield,
Though a blanket my left hand embraced for a shield,
Though assault and retreat,—now a cut, now a thrust,
Made hundreds of warriors lay biting the dust,—

Yet the horse, that's mosquitoes, so dinn'd in my ears,
With their trumpet-tongued music, like preux chevaliers ;
And the foot, that's the bed bugs, in battle array,
Like Beelzebub's warriors, so fought for the day ;
And the thought too that you, love, the children, and all,
Would so bitterly "take on," lamenting my fall,
That I blew a retreat, left the bed, and the fight,
And in anger and anguish, eked out the long night.
The carrier is calling, the rest I will tell,
If e'er I get home, dear, alive, stout, and well."

But though to the trout fisher must be awarded the aristocracy of the rod, there is yet no little amusement to be gained from other kinds of angling. The plough boy, whose duties give him no leisure to throw the line during the day, finds his richest enjoyment during the long evenings of autumn, in drawing, with well-strung bob, the eel from his grassy hole, or in throwing lustily to shore the sturdy bull-head. Through the long summer nights too, will he wade up and down the shallow stream, to spear the barville and the sucker, so dazzled by the bright lights of the birchen torch that they become an easy prey. The school boys while away the holiday afternoons, in angling for the minnows and the perch, from the banks of the mill streams, and often with no indifferent success ; while to the lame and the lazy, the frozen lake yields, during the winter, long strings of pickerel, for a market that is never glutted.

In the autumn, or rather in the early autumn, pickerel fishing is no mean sport. The lakes around the

village, and there are many, abound in almost every kind of fish, and tempt to their quiet bays, and weedy, rushy fishing-grounds, not a few lovers of the piscatory art. How beautiful, too, are those lakes, scattered all over our valley, quietly sleeping beneath green hills and dark hemlock-covered cliffs, and lovely lines of verdure laying in the sunshine for miles along their margins ! Some of them are small, scarce measuring half a mile in the whole circuit, and seeming, in their clear bottoms, and gravelled banks, and fresh pastures running up on every side to the farm enclosures, like artificial ponds, made to adorn the landscape. Others, again, are large ; and one, our own " west lake," in its broad, irregular expanse, and high-dashing waves, when the winds were up, seemed, to the eye of childhood, a very sea. But in the still, dreamy days of summer, never was there a lake at once so serene, so sweet, so beautiful ! As you drew up your horse on the hill, over which passes the road, that you might observe more leisurely that broad expanse of water, bounding by such sweeping curves of pasture and woodland, one side dark with a forest of blackest hemlocks, and the other light and smiling with green herbage and solitary maples ; as you pass through the farm-yard of the neatest cottage in the west part, and walk slowly down the descent to the water's edge, marking the far-off mountains, cloud-crowned or shining in glittering sun-light, and the near-by tongue of land, half dividing the lake, with cattle grouped upon

its very point, or in among the water ; as you reclined listlessly in your boat upon its light surface, without a wave but of your own creating, as the ripples go circling away from the sharp stem of your bonnie cut-water, gazing upon the white sand, and huge rocks, and sunken logs far down in its clear depths—or as you stood watching your lines, in momentary expectation of the bobbing cork jerking beneath the water, and the whole scene of mountains, and woods, and hills, and green fields, and deep glens, steals unexpectedly into your heart, like the faces of old, familiar friends—I am sure you would say, that nothing could be finer in all New England than this hill-girdled expanse of bright blue water, in the smiling valley of Berkshire.

But most of all is the lake rich in its beauties, in the earliest sunlight of morning. The pike-angler knows well that then is the time the fish are most readily tempted by his bait, and that if he can be upon his ground, and throw over his lively shiners before the morning breaks, he will seldom fail of hooking some one of the huge tenants of the weedy bottom. How gloriously the morning lights up the old Tagkannucs,—how sweetly the birds sing—how musical is every bleat and low of sheep and cattle over the pastures—nobody knows, who has not often met the morning on the lake, and shaken hands with her, the rosy fingered, like an old school-boy friend. By degrees the heaven clears up into the broad living light, the earth buds out beneath it in all the beauty of summer, the enamelling

is warm upon the mountains, the clouds are touched off by golden outlines and single tints, the long winding lines of smoke ascend far upward from every cottage hid beneath embowered shade or behind narrow glen, and the whole sheet of water around is glittering with pearls and diamonds.

"Your cork's under, captain! What in the deuce are you about?"

The captain turns his square, brawny person slowly round; tosses his last bite of bread and salt junk over the side; rises slowly; carefully takes up his rod; lowers his point, that the fish may not feel the hook; braces his feet; and waits for him to start off with the line.

"How is he, captain?"

"A four pounder, I think! Hush!" There he goes off, like a whale—he's swallowed the bait—this way—that way—wearying himself with useless struggles—and at each angle he turns, drawn nearer the boat. One moment, he comes up with open mouth to the surface—he darts back again—is again drawn towards the boat—is in sight—his tail dashes the water into your face, and—one skilful throw—he lies on the bottom of the boat, floundering, leaping, splashing, a glorious prize.

"By Jove, he's ours! the fish is ours!

The noble fish, the thumper!

Strike through his gills the ready gaff,

And bending homewards, we will quaff

Another glorious bumper!"

These are but a part of the amusements which shed a light over the ordinarily quiet flow of village life. The picture of that life indeed is feeble and dim on the canvass where we have endeavored to portray it. But to our mind's eye it stands complete ; a painting of light and shade so harmoniously blended, that we love it, and love to dwell upon it, as we do upon the memory of a master-piece of Rembrant or Guido. It is here that humanity is seen in its softest coloring, that the kindly feelings and the social virtues live and grow, when the quiet and less turbulent pleasures delight the taste without depraving the heart. Its scenes inspire purity of mind, its objects correct the artifice and interestedness of the world, and the pure air of its mountains, while it invigorates the frame, awakens from the heart such tones of feeling as lull while they elevate, as soothe while they inspire.

“ God made the country, but man made the town ! ”

CARY ARRAN.

What is the secret sin,—this untold tale,
That art cannot extract, nor penance cleanse?

MYSTERIOUS MOTHER.

I HAVE a short and melancholy tale to relate of the fate of a poor cottage girl,—a story of all truth, of untoward events and sad conclusions, and which can interest those only, whose hearts love to look on the humble underplots which are carried on in the great drama of life.

From the summit of Red Hill, the observer cannot fail to notice, lying just below him, towards the southwest, the broad lake Ossipee. On its northern banks, just beneath the dark mountains which break down to its very edge, there may be traced a road winding around its bays and inlets, sometimes passing over the rugged spurs which jut out like promontories into the waters, and again running in a circuitous line along the smooth pebbled beach. To the spectator it seems as if the houses, which he sees scattered along the road, were crowded by the precipitous hills into scarce space enough for a miserable garden, so close and high do

they rampant about the little placid lake. But to the traveller over the road, rich intervalles are seen to run off from the well-stocked barns into the indentations of the mountains, and green pastures slope upwards, for a mile or more, on their broad swelling breasts. It is in fact, one of the most fertile valleys in New Hampshire, and sustains a population cut off from the great world almost as much as the inhabitants of Iceland, but like them, contented, independent, and virtuous.

Nearly midway of the valley, where the high land rolls down to the very waters, are situated, within a few rods of each other, two houses,—one the parsonage of the hamlet,—the other a brown one-storied cottage. From the courtyard of the latter, prettily fenced in with well trimmed hawthorn, and set round with flowering shrubs and garden plants, is perhaps the finest view of this lake and the mountain which you can find anywhere. In mild weather the placid sheet spread out before you, far away as the eye can see, its surface just dimpled with wavelets, and besprinkled here and there with pine-wooded islands.

On a Sabbath morning especially, I have thought the prospect exceedingly lovely ; perhaps from the associations which the day of our blessed Lord always brings with it ; perhaps from the air of quiet and cleanliness, and good humor, which is breathed around the cottage, both by its inmates, and every passing church-goer. The kine standing knee-deep in the cool burn under the shadow of overhanging willows ; the gray

heron floating above from one dark green tuft of rushes to another ; the birds singing among the trees ; the drowsy hum of the myriads of bees, that are floating through the clear, mild air ; the whirr of the partridge, heard from among the purple heather, that glows in the bright sunlight, girding the hills with a ruby zone ; the cawing of the crows, the quacking and splashing of the ducks in the offing, and the leap of the trout after the gray flies sporting on the surface of the lake, —are all to my eye beautiful enhancers of the most beautiful scenery I ever saw. Then the Farmers coming along, cracking blithely of crops and herds, and week day avocations ; the maidens in their Sunday best, chattering with the tall brawney beaux as they walk slowly by the holly hedge ; the old grandmother, to whom all give a kind greeting, aided by some good daughter to come out once more to the gathering of God's people ; the plough horse saddled and pillioned, jogging lazily along under his double burden, or, harnessed to the wagon, drawing parents and children on the thick stowed seats, up the long hill to the meeting house ; give a life to the picture of which no lover of nature in her rural mantle, can ever tire.

It was on a Sunday like this, in September of 182—, that I first saw the individual whose name stands at the head of our story. I had found myself, in a leisurely tour I was making among the highlands of the Granite State, one Saturday noon approaching the village of which I have spoken. Charmed with the beauty of

the scenery, and the tidiness of the little inn where I had stopped to bait my horse, I concluded to give up my intention of reaching the other side of the mountains, and to pass the day of rest here. The afternoon had been spent, gun in hand, in wandering over the hills after moor-fowl, and in gazing in rapture on the magnificent landscape, which every higher elevation opened to me. The supper; the loquacious but respectful landlord, whose stories entertained me till a late hour at night; the bed, white and sweet as the old Piscator, Isaac Walton could have wished; and the bright clear morning; had all prepared me, so far as external things can ever do it, to pass a pleasant and useful Sunday. After breakfast, leaving his wife and three buxom daughters to drive to church, mine host started with me on foot. The air was soft and balmy, and the outline of the glorious old mountains stood out clear and sharply defined against the pure blue of the cloudless sky. From each farm-house and cottage, the inhabitants were departing, as the sound of the church bell gave its summons,

“——— and hamlets low,

With whose thick orchard-blooms the soft winds play,
Lent out their inmates in a happy flow,
Like some freed vernal streams.”

The way sides were full of pleasant faces, all directed the same way. Among others, I could not help noticing two children, who came out from the cottage of which I have spoken, and who sported along, hand

in hand, preceding an old and venerable woman, towards the church. It might have been the neatness of their dress, or the fondness with which the old grandame watched over them, or the affectionate attachment they manifested for each other, that induced me to inquire out their names and history. They were both orphans ; the boy just entering upon his twelfth year, the only living descendant of the aged grandmother, and brought by her three years before from the West Indies, where his father,—her only son,—and his mother, had suddenly died. Collecting through a friend the scattered remains of what had been a princely fortune while her son lived, she had returned with her grandchild to her old home, to watch over him with more than a mother's fondness, while God should spare her life, and to commit him to the care of those who knew her, when she should be taken away. The boy was known and loved by all the villagers, and in the few duties of the farm which he had learned to discharge, warm hearts and ready hands ever cheered and aided him. As he passed lightly along, driving the cows to pasture in the early morning—as he toiled through the day in the little garden just behind the cottage—as he pursued the sheep, or milked the cows, or modestly did the errands and returned quickly home—the delicate boy won the hearts of the simple, honest country folks. “He was not made,” they said, “to toil so hard ; he was born a gentleman, and ought not to work for his living ; and a thousand pities it was

that he couldn't be brought up to learning." And no wonder they said so, for even in his working-day dress of coarse and awkward garments, his pale face, and soft dark eye, looking out from the ringlets that clustered over his manly forehead, made him seem too beautiful for a child of Earth.

The girl had just completed nine summers, and she too was an orphan. My informant, however, knew less about her, and could only tell me that she was the daughter of a gentleman, who, in travelling through the country, had taken sick and died; and that, with a few hundred dollars, she had been committed to the care of the good lady, to bring up as her own. She had no friends that were known, save those among whom Providence had thrown her, and like the boy, from her bright and happy face, had won the love of all who knew her. The good man added, that the people were all kind to the widow and her orphans, and that the little farm, with the aid of neighbors and townsmen, was well cultivated, and gave them a comfortable support.

I was so much interested in the eventful history of the family, that I resolved to seek an acquaintance with them, and expressed my wish so to do to my host. He cheerfully acquiesced, and on the evening of the Sabbath, I walked with him over to the cottage. The widow met us pleasantly at the door, and asking us in, gave us seats in a neat and comfortable parlor. The house was small, consisting of but two rooms and a

kitchen, but it was a pattern of neatness. In the windows were fresh wild flowers in jars of water,—a few books filled the hanging shelves in the corner,—the large Bible lay open on the table, from which the boy had been reading to his grandmother, and a single candle cast its flickering light over a glass-covered time-piece on the mantel, a relic of the wealthier days of the occupants. Over the whole room was diffused an air of elegance almost, for which I was unprepared, while the easy and unassuming manners of the grandmother, united to the pure pale face of the orphan boy, made me forget that I was in the lowliest cottage of the hamlet. The girl was asleep on her little couch, but the flaxen ringlets that strayed over her fat ruby cheek, and the dimpled hand that the boy held in his own, while we remained, gave rich promises of the beauty of her wakeful hours. We could not stay long, but in that short visit I learned to love that family, connected to me by no tie but that of sympathy, as I shall never love a family of strangers again.

Seven years had passed away, coloring my life with both bright and dark tints, before I saw the villagers again. In the meantime, a bequest from a distant relative had placed Madame Wyville and Charles in circumstances of comparative affluence. Cary Arran, too, no longer the little flaxen haired child, had been raised above the fear of poverty, by an unexpected recovery of a portion of her father's property. Of course, I found the condition of the family not a little changed.

They still occupied the cottage, now rendered exceedingly attractive, by the improvements which wealth and cultivated taste could make. The pebbly beach still stretched smooth and white up to the hawthorn hedge, and the clear mirrored mountains lay still and soft in the far-down depths of the lake. Above, the blue sky was bending over the scene, as if it had been obscured by no storm or cloud, since I saw it before, and around, were the same green pastures, and dashing rivulets, and old mountains. It was a complete realization to my eye of the picture which had lived in my mind, wherever I had been, of that cottage home.

The interval had brought changes enough over the fair creatures I saw in childhood. Charles Wyville had passed honorably through a full course of study at Dartmouth, and had just returned to his grandmother, to spend a few months preparatory to commencing the study of divinity. He had brought with him, however, a constitution enfeebled and perhaps irrecoverably shaken, by the severe studies he had prescribed himself in college, and his physician had told him, that it was by extreme care, and entire relaxation from any mental exertion, that he would ever recover his health. He was now in his nineteenth year; in person slender and delicate, and timid in address, yet with a beauty and manliness of face, and a gracefulness of carriage, that I never saw surpassed, even among men of the world.

Nor had fewer changes been wrought by the lapse

of time in Cary Arran. She too had been from home for the improvement of her mind, and had returned to her kind protectress, whom she loved as a mother, a cultivated and elegant girl. Just at the age of seventeen, her elastic shape had grown round and full, and the wild girl had already ripened to the woman. An expression of thought, when the play of her features was in repose, that rested upon her lip and forehead, gave her the appearance of being two or three years older than she was ; but when the excitement of a walk, or a sail upon the lake, moved all the buoyancy of her spirits, and her glad laugh echoed joyously back from woods and rocks, her face became like the child's face I had seen tripping churchward, seven years before.

Such was the happy family to which I returned, after so long an absence, and in which I became an inmate for many weeks. Happy ! yes, they were happy,—too happy in utter unconsciousness of the darkness before them. The mother, for she was to them a mother indeed, in a healthful and vigorous old age, and still retaining unimpaired the use of all her faculties, was happy in the loveliness and promise of those whose affection only bound her to the world. They too, were happy in each other's love, and in the fondness of her for whose comfort they wished to live.

But how certain is every cup of happiness, in this world, to be mingled with some bitter potion. Charles Wyville and Cary Arran, both nurtured by the same foster-mother,—grown up under the same roof, and

mingling the joys and delights of childhood together, loved as brother and sister. No! Cary Arran so loved, with the purity, and fondness, and confiding friendship of an only sister; but not as a brother did Charles Wyville return that love. She had grown into womanhood under his eye,—had leaned on him as her support, and had trusted him as the friend and defender of her weakness,—had sympathized in all his aspirations, and efforts, and success, in college life. His heart had taken its stamp from the peaceful years of their childhood, and the favorite pictures which his imagination called up when they were far separated, were the blue eyes and rosy cheeks of the sweet child, who, in the long summer days, sat with him in the porch, and strung the fallen blossoms of jessamine on stalks of grass. And when, after the long years of absence, he met her, his sweet sister, his constant correspondent and friend,—less radiant perhaps, but more winning than his fancy had created,—invested with all the loveliness of earth, his fate was for ever sealed. He loved her,—loved her as few can love, with the intensity of a noble and generous nature, with the fulness of a truthful and single heart.

I was again far away in the busy world, and three years rolled by before I revisited the happy valley. Alas! how changed did I find all that was dear to me then! The cottage stood the same, with the twining creepers around its doors and windows; but its inmates were gone. The voices that filled those low-roofed

rooms with light and gladness, and high thoughts, were for ever hushed, or far away. I will not anticipate the catastrophe of my sad story, but return to the successive events which followed soon after my last visit.

Mrs. Wyville, though removed above the pecuniary necessities which depressed her on her first settling in the cottage, was still greatly loved by the villagers. So far from envying, every one rejoiced in her good fortune; and sympathy for the poor widow and her orphans had only given place to reverence for madam; "who was no more proud in her riches, than she had been complaining in her poverty." Still, though situated in the midst of friends, of true hearts and great moral worth, Mrs. Wyville felt greatly the need of different society for her wards; and among the conversations frequently had with the children after their return, plans were made for spending the winter in some one of the larger towns, where Cary might have the benefit of intercourse with those of her own age, while Charles should pursue his professional studies.

Before any certain plan had been matured, young Wyville was agreeably surprised one morning with a visit from an old college acquaintance, Albert Alverly. Though two years his senior in the classes, Alverly had formed with Wyville a pleasant friendship, which, however, had never ripened into much intimacy. For the two years since he had been graduated, most of his time had been passed in Paris; and while his friend

supposed him to have been occupied in his studies, Alverly had passed his time in the lavish and corruptive dissipation of that gay metropolis. When Wyville knew him he had a heart as yet unsullied by any positive vice, though unburdened by any very romantic notions of an overstrained morality. His residence at Paris, however, had unsettled the few good principles he ever had, and though improved in all the accomplishments of a man of the world, he had become as heartless a villain as ever existed. The son of a high family, well educated, of handsome person and irresistible address, he had become proverbial for his gallantries, at an age when most young men have scarcely entered into life.

He visited the Wyvilles, however, under the garb of college friendship, and was received without suspicion into the bosom of their family circle. His easy and gentlemanly manners, his knowledge of the world, his shrewd and piquant conversation, his entire freedom from all arrogance and haughtiness, and the apparent openness of his character, won at once the partiality of Cary; nor was he slow to perceive and take advantage of it. As he had come to the north with the intention of passing a summer, it was settled that he should remain several weeks at the cottage, until the Wyvilles should remove for the winter, and he had given his friends notice of his intentions.

The few weeks that followed are described by the simple village people to have been crowded with every

amusement that could be devised. Rambles over the mountains, exploring excursions on horseback, sailing parties upon the lake, and drives to the neighboring towns, occupied the time of each pleasant day; while music, games at cards and chess, or social and lively conversation, chased off the dullness of the long cheerless rains. Cary was exceedingly fond of all field-sports, and in Albert Alverly she found a companion, who would brave every danger, and enter with full zeal into all her enthusiasm for the natural scenery about them. They traced together every mountain streamlet to its source; and over hill and dell, through tangled underbrush and dark towering forests, they wandered, day after day, in search of some cave, or mountain pass, or beautiful prospect, of which Cary had heard, and which she longed to see.

In all these excursions there was utter ruin ripening for the beautiful girl. The grace and manliness of the figure of Alverly, set off in its finest proportions by the tight hunting-dress he always wore; the close cloth cap, thrown back upon his head, showing, in its full expanse, his pale forehead, gracefully clustered round by thick black curls; and above all, the open, frank, and unconstrained courtesy with which he ever addressed her, had made her heart his own, long before she had confessed it to herself. Cary had a deep current of poetry in her feelings, and Alverly's extensive knowledge of the lighter literature of the day opened to her mind a source of pleasure before unknown, and invest-

ed all he said with a charm fatal to the poor girl's peace of mind—alas! in the end, fatal to all her bright hopes of happiness. In fact, the joyousness of all this disguised its danger :

“Terribly beautiful the serpent lay,
Wreathed like a coronet of gold and jewels,
Fit for a tyrant's brow ;—”

and the fascination of his death-dooming eye was already felt by his victim.

Why Madam Wyville should have been blind to the natural effect of all this upon the heart of her loved daughter seems strange enough. But passing strange it was, that Charles Wyville should not have seen it, before it was too late to correct the evil. So entirely, however, had the handsome stranger won the confidence of his unsuspecting host—so thick a veil of apparent generosity had the tempter thrown over the duplicity and cursed intentions of his heart, that there seems to have been no suspicion of danger, until it was revealed too late. Charles Wyville even, with his characteristic trusting nature, had confided to Alverly the secret of his passion for Cary, and his hopes and fears had met, he thought, a generous response in the heart of his friend. Alas! his friend—the cherished guest—the loved one even of the most beautiful of that happy circle, was a friend in disguise—a base and heartless hypocrite.

But the *denouement* was at hand. Charles had at

last ventured to make known his feelings to her he had so long loved, undoubting, it appears, of mutual return, until he learned the cruel truth from her own lips. "No, Charles," she said to him, as they stood hand in hand on the evening of his proposal, while the bright stars were mellowed in their thousand reflections from the bosom of the lake, and the soft summer night breeze was waving the ringlets over her beautiful neck—"no, it can never be. Bitterly do I repent that my conduct should have led you to misunderstand me. Never can I be aught else to you than what I have been up to this hour, a sister—to love you sisterly and fondly. I will watch by your sick-bed and bathe your aching temples; I will cheer you in your pursuits, and sympathize in your troubles, and glory in your honor—as I ever have done. But do not intreat me, dear, dearest brother!—oh, do not! for I can never be to you more than a sister."

The senses of the student reeled, and his brain whirled round in giddiness, as he replied, "Then my heart, Cary, is crushed, and every hope of the future is buried, in the answer you have given me. Oh, what is life worth, without your voice to cheer me on in difficulty, and your own sweet smile to bless me when successful? Cary, my own darling Cary, is it so? Can you never be mine—my own—my best loved and cherished wife?"

"Never, Charles, never! It may not, must not be. Oh, put away, subdue these feelings, which will ren-

der us both miserable, and will bring down our mother's gray hairs to the grave. I will love you still—and will ever be, as I have ever been, your own, devoted, loving sister—your tried and best friend ;” and putting her arms around his neck, while her heaving bosom showed the struggle of her heart, she kissed his forehead, and turned away to the house.

A few days after this, Alverly received letters calling him hastily home. The next day, however, had been fixed upon for a ride over the hills to Ossipee Falls ; and at the earnest entreaty of the family, Alverly concluded to postpone his departure till the day succeeding. The morning was without a cloud ; and before the sun had risen over the mountain tops, the party were on horseback, and ready to proceed.

Alverly had ridden some rods in advance, to let down a pair of bars of a field, through which they were to proceed, and Cary and Charles were coming leisurely on, when the horse on which the latter rode tripped, and plunging suddenly forward, fell to the ground. Wyville leaped from him unharmed, but found, on examination, that the fore-leg of the animal was badly sprained, or broken. Nothing was to be done but for him to return, and if he could procure another horse, to overtake them, or at best to meet them on their homeward route. Cary and Alverly proceeded on, therefore, together. The day was beautiful ; the air of that delicious mildness which makes September in the country the finest of all the months ;

the rich fields of grain were waving over the landscape, or ready stacked for the harvest; the laborers were gathering the yellow corn, or driving the heavily-loaded wagons slowly to the barns; and all animated nature was busy in improving the glorious sunlight, which vivified and blessed the landscape. Cary was a fine rider; and mounted on a beautiful and powerful steed, which she managed with fearless address, her cheek tinged by the fresh air, and her dark riding cap, which allowed a single ringlet to escape each side of her face, giving to her complexion a fairer shade than usual, if that were possible—her eyes, too, full of expression and soul, as ascent after ascent opened richer and more extensive prospects around them—she made Alverly think her more lovely than ever before. As they reached the highest point over which they were to pass, and drew up for a moment to allow their horses to breathe, Cary exclaimed, “Oh, beautiful, beautiful! Saw you ever such a magnificent prospect! Look at that lake—and those deep blue mountains far over it, towards the south—and those fairy islets—oh, is it not most enchanting!”

“Beautiful!” answered Alverly, wheeling his horse to Miss Arran’s side, and bending towards her with the graceful address of which he was so perfect a master, “Beautiful indeed! And see, too, these waves below us, dashing against the cliffs that are crowded out into the lake, as if angry at their usurpation! Do they not remind you of those fine lines in Rokeby?—

‘ And like a steed in frantic fit,
That flings the froth from curb and bit,
The river chafes her waves to spray
O’er every rock that bars her way,
Till foam-globes on her eddies ride
Thick as the schemes of human pride.’ ”

As Alverly was repeating these lines, Miss Arran’s eyes, glowing with the enthusiasm of the scene, turned full upon his, and were as instantly turned away, a deep blush suffusing her cheek, as she met the intensity of his gaze. Alverly saw his advantage, and bending nearer to her, whispered, “ Does Miss Arran know how devotedly I love her ? It is the last opportunity I may have in many months to tell her the burning, torturing secret of my heart—to avow to her my idolizing love, and to ask if I may still cherish it ? ”

Cary was silent, for her heart swelled with emotions too big for utterance, while Alverly continued—

“ Do not deny me all hope, my dear Miss Arran, even when I avow to you that I make this declaration with no prospect of its being approved by my friends at home. They are Catholics—bigotedly attached to their ancient faith, and bent on devoting the wealth, as well as the children of our family, to the cause of the Church. Oh, do not repel me, because I do not deceive you, but promise me to delay an answer to my entreaties, until I may return to them, and tell them of your excellence and loveliness. Sure am I ”——

But before he could complete the sentence, Miss

Arran's horse, stung by some insect, or frightened at the noise of the waves dashing below, suddenly reared, and starting forward, plunged almost to the very brink of the precipice. The suddenness of the danger before her, restored her self-possession, and curbing the frightened animal with all her strength, and wheeling him around a narrow sheep-track in the rocks, she had him completely under her control, and had again reached the road, before Alverly overtook her. The difficulty of the descent, and the necessity of extreme caution in guiding the horses over the rough pathway, prevented Alverly from resuming a conversation which had filled Cary's mind with a thousand forebodings.

A mile farther brought them to the hut, where they were to leave their horses, and proceed on foot to the Falls. From the hut there was no positive path, thick hazles having sprung up over the land, and the ground being scattered with moss-covered stones. With Alverly's aid, Cary was able to reach without difficulty the rock, the boundary of the entangled ground they had passed, and the commencement of the sudden descent of the stream. Crossing a narrow bridge of pine trees, thrown across where two projecting rocks from the opposite sides of the chasm had approached near to each other, and descending by a slippery path to a broad gravelly platform, they were enabled to reach a little island, that lies just above the very verge of the precipice. And here a scene full of beauty and grandeur arrested their attention. The island was matted

with briar, and foliage, and shooting-boughs, that bent down below to touch the water, while some rose, light and blending tenderly, and were scarcely discernible as a separation from the richness of the parent bank. On the parts most bare of earth, lay tufts of elegantly bending grass, delicately pencilled in relief against the deeper colors and retiring shades, while the darker roots were dotted with white, peering flowers. From the point where the waters separated, the stream on one side glided smoothly, clear as crystal, over the declining bed; on the other, it ran rapid and furious, darting from between the precipices, like a maniac from his confinement, until, uniting in one large body, it dashed into the chasm below.

Inspired by the beauty and wonderful magnificence of the scene, Cary's spirits broke from their restraint, and her brilliant mind, glowing in description, lighted up every subject on which it touched. Alverly was by her side, and seeming to catch her enthusiasm, he echoed back the rich and glowing thoughts of his delighted companion. Together they wandered over the island,—descended the steep bank,—clambered around the rugged and slippery sides, and gazed and communed on the wonders of nature around them. As his mind, rich as it seemed to her, in all the treasures of lore and poetry, called up a spirit from every object around them, Cary listened entranced, until she unconsciously grew silent, and indulged, without reserve, in that proudest luxury of love, pride in the gifted pow-

ers of her lover. Danger was around her, but she knew it not,—or if she saw it, she loved it. The day glided unconsciously away in the blissful, intoxicating excitement,—the sun was shining with his last rays through the deep green foliage above them, as they stood at the foot of the Falls, gazing on the terrible descent of the waters, which rushed foaming in wrath and blackness, into the gulf beneath. Cary clung more closely to Alverly than before, his arms around her form, her head resting upon his shoulder, so beautiful that her face and form seemed like an unwinged seraph;—was she unconscious that it was Alverly who stood by her? Or, my God! had she fallen?

It was past midnight of the same day. The little village was hushed in sleep, and nothing unusual was to be observed about the cottage, except it might be the faint glimmering of a light, through the crevices of a lattice-window in the attic. Presently the door softly opened, and there came out a figure, so closely wrapped in a large dark cloak, that one could determine nothing of the age or sex of the wearer. Passing quickly around the hawthorn hedge, and onward towards a little bower, densely covered with grape vines, which stood at the foot of the garden, in a copse of locust saplings, the person hesitated, looked around for a moment, and then entered the bower. Just then a slight rustling was heard among the shrubs at the other side, and as, springing forward, the cloak fell from one side of the listener, there might have been seen the suf-

fused cheeks and heaving bosom of Cary Arran. "Is it you, Albert?" she whispered with a wildly beating heart. "It is I, my fair Cary," said a voice in reply; "who else should it be, to meet my beautiful one at this hour of the night?"—and the speaker stood beside her. She was in his arms, and their meeting was a long and fond embrace. "I was delayed, my love, listening to a noise I heard in Charles's chamber, and I fear I have kept you long waiting."

"Not long, my Albert," said the fair girl, "and if you had, a moment such as this, more than repays me. But oh, Albert, what have I done! and how can I bear now the sense of your absence. I have given you my whole heart; every thought, and every impulse; and now you leave me! Oh, if you ever love me less, the very life of my being will die."

"You wrong me, dearest Cary," said her lover;—"I never shall,—I never can; but you know I must leave you,—my letters are imperative on the subject; still it shall be but for a few weeks, and to gain the consent of my parents to our marriage, and then I return to claim you as my own beautiful, acknowledged bride."

"Weeks! Not so long as that, Albert, for in my calendar weeks seem an eternity. Let it be only for days, and I will watch and pray to heaven for its constant care over you, and your safe return. But oh, my dearest, do not forget that I have sacrificed every thing for you,—that my life is now indissolubly bound to

yours,—that I have given you all; my weal for time and for eternity!" and the poor girl, overcome with a flood of emotions, sunk into his arms.

"Do you doubt me now,—so soon, my beloved?" answered Alverly. "Have I not sworn to love you for ever,—to return in a few short days and claim you as my own,—to make you mine before the world? Oh, do not distress me by these fears and forebodings!"

"But, dear Albert," exclaimed the fair girl, while her soft liquid eyes gazed earnestly in his, "can you not let me go with you? Oh, think, should some accident befall you, I am ruined, undone for ever! Dearest, I have thrown all the flowers of my youth behind me, and I can trust only in you."

"And I will never deceive you, dear, darling Cary! It may not be that you go with me now, for I could not endure the suspicions it would throw upon your character. I leave you only to defend you, dearest,—to return to you,—to bless you,—to make you, before the world, my own for ever;" and he embraced, with passionate fondness, the relying girl,—“But hark, Cary,—heard you nothing? we are surely watched;—speedily go you in, and leave me!" and they parted for ever.

We have now followed the deceiver, till he had spread his net for the unwary bird, and the meshes had closed around it. I make no plea for Cary, though she has found forgiveness from Him, who was "tempted in all points like ourselves." Suffice it to say, that even in this beautiful and high-minded maiden, a lofty

spirit, that knew not in what sin consisted, was united to the powerful passions of humanity. With the very resolution on her lips, which would have proved her safety, she fell. Her approaches to sin had not been gradual; she had not been lured on by a familiarity with those sweet and flowery avenues, which lead to its Circean bowers; she fell in a single instant, and the path of her innocence and her pride crumbled beneath her feet. Alas, how fully and sadly did her life realize the description of the gifted one of our century, whose mind perhaps partook more largely of the sweet and bitter of humanity, than any other who ever lived—

“How beautiful is all this visible world!
How lovely in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence, make
A conflict with Deity, and men
Are what they name not to themselves, and trust
To each other.”

* * * * *

Alverly did not return. Days and weeks passed away at the cottage, but no tidings came from the departed guest. The mother and son wondered, as the world wonder, at the change which must have come over him, little suspecting how every conjecture of his fortunes or purpose went to the heart of Cary, like a barbed arrow. She, poor girl, hoping against hope, pined and drooped under the fatal secret, which burned in the hidden recesses of her heart. I need not trace

the events as they succeeded each other in the once happy circle, each tending to the last dreadful consummation. In the mean time Madame Wyville took sick and died—died in the triumphs of gospel faith, ignorant to the last of the error of her loved and faithful foster-child. And what a blessed relief did this seem to the unfortunate girl, and how amid her sorrow for the departed, did she thank Heaven that her mother's blessing, undimmed by reproaches of neither tone nor feeling, shone from her death-pillow, on the soul's darkness of her wayward daughter.

Left alone with her foster-brother,—they two alone in the wide world,—her heart filled with perpetual dread lest each day should discover to him what he had a right to hear from her own lips, Cary revealed, with bitter shame and keen self-reproaches, the secret of her guilt. She confessed all,—the thousand tender offices and endearing names by which her impassioned lover had won her heart,—the excitement of that scene of utter solitude, when the roar of the cataract and the beauty of the landscape had complete possession of her feelings, isolating her from every being in the wide world but him, who stood by her side as guide and protector,—the vows of eternal constancy made before high heaven, with every solemn imprecation on him who could basely win a maiden's heart and prove unfaithful,—the passionate intoxication of the moment,—the withering, scorching shame which sank her spirit to the depths of the earth,—the alternating hope and fear

of his return,—the abject despair which settled on her soul long days and nights,—the frightful dreams, and horrid thoughts, and fiend-like temptations, which beset every lonely hour,—of all that was in her heart she concealed nothing. And did he,—could he love her still? The noble, pure, high-minded youth! could he love her, a thing of shame and sin? Oh, yes! for was she not his sister, although she would not be his bride? and when he beheld her beautiful eyes as she told him the secret of her sorrow, now gazing with such liquid softness into his own, now wandering in almost unconscious delirium, and felt her blood throbbing so rapidly in the beautiful transparent veins of her forehead resting upon his hand, he prayed to God to spare her life, that he might show to her how dearer far she was still to him, than all else in the world! It is true, that deep sorrow fell upon his spirit, and that an indignation, so terrible, was roused by the recital of his sister's wrongs, that nothing but dire revenge could satisfy it; yet to her was he as ever the loving, kind, and devoted brother.

It remained for them then to seek a temporary seclusion. In all the preparations for this—in the disposing by sale of the property they held—in the tokens of friendship which were distributed among long-loved neighbors and friends—in the method of travelling—the place selected, the conveniences provided, no allusion was ever afterwards made to the one painful subject. The offence was forgiven, and the misguided no-

ble-minded girl was made in every way to feel that one yet loved her as before. We will not trace their wanderings, their concealment, their saddened hearts—their fears and blighted hopes and ruined prospects. Suffice it to say, that in less than three months, the bright and beautiful—the proud and spirited—the sinning and forgiven daughter of the cottage home was dead. She died penitent, forgiving and praying for her injurer, and trusting for her own pardon in His mercy, “who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust.”

Charles Wyville returned to the village with the remains of his sister, and amid the sympathies of former neighbors and friends, performed the last acts of friendship, which God has kindly permitted us, in the first bursts of grief, to do for the lost ones we have loved. And who that has lost a friend, has not felt the consolation which those last testimonials of love so full of tenderness and meaning, afford to the bitterness of sincere sorrow? As if the departed spirit were by, watching over, approving, and even smiling upon, the almost only deeds of true gratitude, which the world can show. He remained long enough in the village only to dispose by sale of his mother's property, and to collect his own and his sister's, which she had bequeathed to him when bidding adieu to those who had so long ministered kindly to his deceased friends; and leaving among them many testimonials of his generosity, he departed for ever.

* * * * *

Two years after this, I met Charles Wyville standing at the door of one of the large hotels in a southern city. After the first salutations were over, I asked him his present business, and his object in coming so far south.

"I came here but yesterday," he replied, "and to meet Mr. Alverly. He arrived in a packet ship from Havre only last week, and I understand intends leaving for the north tomorrow; but I shall meet him first."

"You mean then to have him arrested and tried?" I observed with some anxiety.

"No!" he answered, "arrested I mean he shall be; but not tried by an earthly tribunal!"

"Good Heaven!" I exclaimed, "You surely do not mean to challenge him!"

"I do!" was his reply. "I know well enough how you regard duelling, and I was taught to look upon it as you do,—as a deadly sin, for which there can be no extenuation,—no possible excuse! I even now regard it as you do,—as a bold and presumptuous infraction of God's holy commandment,—as cherishing thoughts of murder in the heart against one of God's creatures! But it all avails not, and even in defiance of early education,—of the holy principles which a mother's love instilled within my heart,—of the plain law of heaven; I go forward to this meeting with Albert Alverly. Say nothing to dissuade me from my purpose,—it is fixed, immovable,—and one of us must fall by the other's hand. The challenge is already sent, and I am now waiting its acceptance."

"But will he fight with you," I asked.

"He will," he replied. "He will not dare refuse me; for the character of my friend, who has just gone to meet him, is such, that it would brand him for ever with cowardice, to decline the meeting. Besides," he added with frightful distinctness, "were he to refuse, I would beat him to death in the public streets, as I would a mad dog."

"But you have no chance with him," I urged, "he is a professed duellist, and, as you well know, a dead shot."

"That may be," replied Wyville, "but if the practice of every day, for two years, can give me an equality with him, I have it. Heavens! I should like to see Alverly when Lieut. R. meets him. It will try his metal rather, wont it?" and the expression of revenge, with which he uttered the wish, seemed to me absolutely horrible.

Although principled against the accursed practice of duelling in every form, I determined, nevertheless, to be present at the meeting, and Wyville promised to send word to my lodgings of the time it should be appointed. He did so, and I also learned from the messenger, that the challenge had been readily accepted, and that the seconds were then together, settling the preliminaries.

It was a beautiful summer morning, as I came with Wyville upon the ground selected for the interview. It had been settled by the seconds, that the meeting

should take place at six o'clock, on a parade, across the river; and as both of them anticipated its turning out a dangerous affair, two distinguished surgeons were in attendance. Indeed, all the arrangements were admirably made, the ground well selected, the time the most fitting, and every thing in readiness, that no detention might take place after the parties were upon the ground. Alverly was already there, dressed in black from head to foot, and looking pale and troubled. No recognition passed between himself and Wyville, and I thought he studiously avoided meeting the latter's stern and steady gaze. The process of loading the pistols was soon got through with; twelve paces were measured off by Lieut. R.; the combatants were placed in their positions, Alverly in fearful contiguity with his irreparably injured and mortal foe; and the pistols put into their hands. As Wyville took the weapon, the slightest imaginable trace of a bitter smile played about his handsome features, which immediately gave way to the look of cold, stern defiance he had worn before.

The seconds stepped back, "Are you ready," exclaimed Lieut. R. "One, Two, Three. *Fire.*"

At the word fire, both pistols were discharged, when Alverly leaped into the air, as it seemed to me, the height of himself, and fell back upon the earth, *a corpse*. He was shot through the brain. Wyville stood unmoved, like a statue of marble. His adversary's ball had passed through his coat, without even giving him a scratch.

I sprang to Wyville and exclaimed, "are you hurt?"

"Is he dead?" asked he in return.

"I fear so," I replied. "Is it not horrible?"

"I wish to know if he is dead?" again demanded Wyville.

"He is," said Lieut. R., who had just come up to us.

"Your ball passed through his brain!"

"Then is my sister's death avenged!"

COUNTRY GIRLS.

Last May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave me,
I said there was naething I hated like men,
The deuce gae w'im, to believe me.—BURNS.

OLD JAMES HOWELL tells, in his familiar letters, of an Indian princess, who, when instructed by a friar of the joys of heaven, and that all good Spaniards went thither after this life, answered, "Then I do not desire to go, if the Spaniards be there; I had rather go to hell, and be free of their company." I hope my fair readers of the city, have not a dislike quite so strong as this to their cousins of the country. True, it is awkward enough at the ball, or the party, or the sumptuous dinner, to be always obliged to introduce Miss Nancy to every stranger she wishes to know, and to for ever stand by to correct the *faux pas* of country tone and manner she is perpetually making; and thither we will not take her. But let us go to her home, for there the joy of the visit will be mutual,—hers in the love of all who claim kin to the old sire she venerates, yours in the fresh air of the blue mountains, and the warm hospitality of kind simple hearts.

I know the house is old and gable-roofed, and the chairs and tables tell of twice two score years they have borne the burden of welcome guests and thrifty larder ! The low studded rooms too, are all out of date, and, like enough, shepherds and swains are still singing their amorous ditties to the love-sick damsels on the blue window hangings, as they did forty years ago ; the pictures are ancient and browned by smoke ; the china is out of date ; and steel-tined forks defy all your art to make them supersede the knife ! But what of it all ? Happiness is here,—happiness too, of which you can partake, be you ever so fastidious ; for neatness and abundance, good taste and cheerfulness, pre-
side over the whole.

Let it be the first morning of your visit. Betimes, long before you think of rousing yourself from the delicious morning sleep, the girls are up and at their several duties. One superintends the dairy, and as the maids bring in the full, frothed pails, she dusts each pan, strains out the milk, and sets them in long rows on the white scoured shelves. The rich cream is skimmed ; the laggard riser from bed among the workmen, is detained behind from the field, to pay his forfeit, in laboring at the churn ; the cheese is curdled and prepared for the press ; and the golden butter is worked, and stamped, and carefully set away, before the cloth has been laid for breakfast. Another oversees the kitchen, gives all her directions for the day, supervises the preparations for the morning meal of the

workmen, arranges, prepares, directs, and executes, with the skill of a practised house-wife. A third sweeps the parlors, dusts the furniture, spreads the table, arranges the flowers, winds the clock, and finds a thousand duties, which the unpractised would never suspect.

Then comes the breakfast, and around it fragrant steams of coffee, and toast, and rich Indian bannocks ; come no half-shut eyes and dawdling figures, too near akin to the stifled air of the just left bed chamber, to join well with pleasant food and cheerful thoughts ; but bright faces meet you, and laughing voices wake you, to the morning greeting. I love the country for this, above all things else, and who does not ? Save me, ye morning deities, from the untwisted papillote, left in haste or forgetfulness on the scarce uncapped head ;—from the loose wrapped robe, so illy concealing what we would not know, that fancy depicts in spite of us, the slip-shod foot and unguarded stocking. Give me, with my tea and toast, an eye clear enough to reflect the morning light ; a cheek ruddy from its fresh air ; an unwrinkled brow and a tidy, buxom figure ! Give me health and cheerfulness before every fashionable grace ; good taste and love of home's mystic circle, above all the factitious accomplishments which modern education bestows.

The breakfast over, a thousand duties present themselves to the eye of the practised house-wife.™ Each female member of the household, as before, knows the

particular department which she is to superintend. If a party is in expectation, or guests are looked for from abroad, unusual occupations employ each willing hand. To preside over the culinary operations, to be familiar with the secrets of the pantry, to be, in fact, adepts in every domestic art, is not, to our fair country girls, ob solete or degrading. They feel accountable for the excellence of every dish ; they smile in conscious triumph at the praises of the puddings and the sauces ; they are proud of the cookery of the rare sirloin, and tender leg of mutton, and well-browned turkey ; nor do they blush to embellish the table with juices and confections, jellies and omelettes, from their own skilful handy work.

Let it not be supposed, however, that country girls are familiar in the mysteries of the ménage alone. I could take the reader to one home, among the rich landholders of the country, and it is of those I speak now, where the female members are not busy, bustling house-wives alone, jingling a bunch of keys, scolding the servants, and boasting only of tidy rooms and well-cooked dinners ; but where education and refinement are found ; where each station is filled with dignity, and each duty performed with pleasure ; where unobtrusive good breeding, without affectation and without constraint, characterizes the whole social circle. And there are thousands of such homes in New England, enclosing comforts and pleasures within their hallowed limits, which city life, in its best and loveliest forms,

cannot afford; and shedding over her bleak, barren hills, a light, caught from the old Puritans, and brightening in the improvements of each successive age. Gentleness dwells in these homes,—gentleness, the talisman of woman's power,—and elegance, setting off each charm, and investing each with its own appropriate hue,—and true and cultivated taste, shedding a halo of grace and beauty around the pleasant hearth. There is to be found the true end of wealth in the cultivated mind and polished manners; in books, and horticulture, and choice collections of the kindred arts; and above all, in religion, the religion of fervor and affection, spiritualizing the movements of the heart, and ennobling the action of life.

But there are other homes in New England, where these last are not all found, and yet where peace and contentment are willing guests. If you would find them, go to the quiet hamlets under the mountains, and you shall discover on many hearths, such light as blesses the poor man in his pilgrimage, and teaches him to be happy and cheerful in the midst of wearisome and unending labor. The good wife's wheel still twists the hank of flax, and the daughter renders each day her fifteen knots of well-spun yarn, as the sun goes down in the west. The loom still plies its old cumbersome frame, creaking in all its joints as warp and filling join hand in hand, from the proceeds of which come frocks, and coats, and trowsers—the flannel petticoat and lindsey-woolsey gown, as in days gone by.

The bright evening fire shines on as happy a circle as the world contains. Busy fingers, from the little school-girl to good old grandam,

“With spectacles bestrid,”

are fast at work on the checked and long-drawn stockings, while the merry jest, or simple ballad, or pleasant song, keep all eyes open. A neighbor drops in, or perhaps a neighbor's son, towards whom the black-eyed girl in the corner casts sundry furtive glances, and with whom she counts the apple-seeds, named and arranged in the palm of his long and bony hand.

Perhaps it is autumn, and all are busy, to the old man and boys, in paring and stringing the apples and pumpkins for drying—a source of no little revenue to the house-wife from the winter's market;—or spring, and over the fire hangs the huge kettle of maple syrup, boiling for sugar, from which the urchins crust lots of candy on their hard-pressed snow-balls;—or summer, and the white, well-chosen straw is neatly braided into the tasteful hat, for the premium at the September fair. So goes the round, each season bringing with it appropriate duties, and each finding ready hands and loving hearts. The week-days are indeed days of toil to the matrons and maidens of the country, but Sunday brings its rest, sweet Sunday,

“Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.”]

With what delight the laughing brunette springs

from her couch on that blessed morning, eager for the hour of prayer and breakfast to pass, and the old church-bell to ring out its glad summons! To be sure, she knows that all worldly thoughts should be banished from the heart, for so her father says; and that holiness should characterize every wish, and purpose, and feeling, during the hours of Sabbath time. But, oh, can she help it? thinking that John will be at church, and will walk by her side to the foot of the lane as she saunters homeward, and best of all, that he has promised to come to-night, as her own loving suitor. She doubts not, she distrusts not, for has she not known him for long years, and passed too happy hours and days with him, near and at a distance—in the fields after the May flowers, among the meadow hay, at the singing school, in the sleigh-ride, and at the husking bees of harvest-home; and in each and all of them, has she not known of his love, though he never told it in words before? Think you, reader, that the plumed hat, or diamond bracelet, give half the joy to the gay lady, who sails to Trinity through the crowded street, that the blue riband, purchased at Mr. Crosby's store, from last week's earnings, and tastefully pinned upon the well-saved bonnet, does to the simple cottager? She may have heard in distant rumors of the splendor and gaiety of the city, but they have been like tales of fairy land, bringing to her unsophisticated heart no dissatisfaction with the artless pleasures and simple gear which the rustic home of her childhood affords.

If the neat white frock and silken 'kerchief render her charms attractive to the eye of him whom she most loves to please, and gain from the gray-haired sire the meed of approbation he gives to the daughters of whom his heart is proud, their uncouth style and long-gone fashion matters nothing to her. Indeed, of this she knows so little, that year after year they have the same beauty to her eye as at first ; and with her,

——“ Where ignorance is bliss,
T'were folly to be wise.”

I have alluded to the evening of Sunday, as the courting time of lovers. It has been so from time immemorial throughout New England, and will doubtless continue to be, so long as the evening of Saturday shall hold its rank as the commencement of holy time. ✓
How well do I remember those brightest hours of my bachelorship, when, dressed in my Sunday best, and equipped with boots and spurs, I sallied forth on my steed, to do battle upon the heart of a black-eyed girl, who lived over the river ! How bright did the windows of that lonely house beam across the waters, looking to me, as I rode far up the sands to the fording-place, like some bright star, shining from the heaven of love ! How warm was the parlor fire ; how white the sanded floor ; how starched and clean the curtains, as I drew them closely over every crevice and corner of the windows ; how large and fair the apples, shining clear from every speck upon the skin,

as they were heaped up upon the japan tray ! But, passing all the rest, fair as the lily, sweet as the summer rose, was the beautiful girl who waited my coming, and whose eye grew brighter as I entered the room ! How fresh do all these Sunday evening scenes—the still hour—the hushed undertone of voice—the ringlets with which my ambitious fingers began to play—the gentle repulse, and half-given frown, and ever-rayed smiles—the lingering departure—the decaying fire, and flickering candle—and the last, long, heart-burning kiss—how fresh do they all return, to taunt my heart, long since satiated, and cold to all that was once so full of heaven !

Nor are scenes such as these promotive of lax morality among the fair daughters of the country. It is their own consecrated evening ; custom has sanctioned it from immemorial time ; and high and firm are the guards which a religious education surrounds each daughter of a descendant of the puritanic Pilgrims. The mother's care is not meanwhile asleep ; for though the courting time and room is sacred from intrusion to the lovers, yet it is only the accepted and honorable suitor who finds the place and hour unwatched by those who would hold a daughter's honor far dearer than her life. It is not unfrequently that the Sunday evening suitor finds his visit forestalled ; for should the fair one change her purpose, or the friends disapprove of the courtship, it needs no more than the presence of the old folks during his visit, to give him timely hints to seek

elsewhere a lady-love. And then the merry laugh at his expense when he has left—the criticisms on his embarrassed manner and awkward adieu—the elation of the fun-loving girl who has jilted him—make many a Sunday evening long remembered and often talked of in a country coquette's life.

Alas, then, for the poor swain! What torments are his for weeks afterwards! To be jilted on his first evening's courtship—to lose for ever the beautiful being of his thoughts, whom he would fain have won, to cheer the old folks' fireside, which is soon to be his own—to meet the laugh of his companions, and the sneers of the girls—to find some dapper clerk, or itinerant singing master, whom he despises in his very soul, basking, at every ride and gathering, in the smiles of his own self-elected bride—and, most grievous of all, to know that his wo-begone face will furnish wicked sport, next Sabbath, to every cluster of laughing girls in the old vestry vestibule.

One of the prettiest girls in our parish was courted by long Abner Rogers.‡ They called him thus, because he had grown, like a birch sapling, from very boyhood, and had never stopped until long after his majority. Abner was the only son of a widowed mother, whose thrifty habits and fluent speech had kept him hard at labor on the farm, summer and winter, till he almost wished she were dead. Abner pined for the day that should tell his one-and-twenty years; for he knew that then the farm and house, the stock and ready money,

were his own, by his father's will. Slowly and heavily did the wheels of time roll on, but roll they did; and the very evening that preceded the day of his freedom, he frankly told his mother, that hereafter he must be his own master. The good woman was shocked, and suddenly turning her thin sharp face, in defiance of the unaccustomed daring of her son, she encountered such a look of resolute and independent manhood, that thenceforth she never ventured to resume her sway.

Abner's first business was to find a wife. He had long looked forward to the time when he might install, by right and law, some loving damsel over the effects of his well-stored house, and pension his mother off upon the jointure the will prescribed. Over the hill there lived a pretty laughing lass, upon whose white teeth and dimpled cheeks Abner had often gazed at church with longing eyes. He had never met her alone, nor had any love passages ever gone between them; but from the pleasant smile with which she greeted his bow as he met her in the street, Abner augured well of the success of his addresses. Clad then in his freedom suit of blue cloth and bright brass buttons, Abner started off, at the twinkling of the earliest star, on the first Sunday night of his majority, to do valorous courting on the heart of the blithesome damsel. His reception was of the most pleasant nature. The way was free from any rival lover; the old folks moved off to bed at an early hour, and every thing seemed auspicious to his ultimate success. Abner sat,

and chatted of horses and cows, sheep and swine, farms and crops, until a late hour of the night; and though he had made no direct proposals, nor moved nearer to the blushing cheeks before him than at first coming in, yet he came away in full belief of having made one successful advance to the ultimatum of his hopes.

A second and third Sunday came, each coming of which found Abner alone by the kitchen fire, with the damsel of his choice. Could he doubt of success? Sure he had not popped the question, nor had she granted the favors which he had dared to ask; but had he not been kindly received?—had she not smiled most graciously upon his coming?—had not the bright fire and cleanly hearth, and bowl of apples, and closed curtains, and lone room, told him plainer than words, that his purpose was understood, and his attentions grateful? Abner was not, however, fully satisfied, and he determined in his heart that another Sunday should not pass without some farther proof of what he wished to know. During the week he revolved the whole matter in his mind, and night and day did he labor, in difficult thought, to frame fitting words for the perilous question. It was a week of trouble. Every thing went wrong. The ripened grass was left unmowed; the uncocked hay was wetted with heavy showers; the cattle broke into the corn-fields; the cows were shut in the pound for straying into a neighbor's enclosure; and the various kinds of farm work were all at sixes and sevens. The truth is, Abner was in love, deep, over head and ears, and was in sad danger.

Another Sunday came at last, and Abner went to church with a heart big in the promise of what the night would bring forth. He was dressed in a span new suit, from top to toe. His form was more erect than it was wont; his face full of meaning; his glances towards the buxom girl in the singing seats, who held his heart enthralled, were frequent, and he felt that they were returned in fullest measure. But, alas! how transitory is human pride! The service was no sooner over than the town clerk, rising from his seat, said aloud, "I hereby publish the intention of marriage between William Depew and Janette Grover!" Poor Abner! he stared for a moment at the public functionary, who, all unconsciously had read the death-warrant to his hopes—turned his rolling eyes on the laughing damsel, now receiving, with blushing face, the thickly proffered congratulations of her female friends; and rushed headlong from the church. The old people gazed with amazement at such an outrage upon the decent demeanor of public worship; and the deacon's dog, sleeping at the door, suddenly awaked from his sun-shiny siesta, sprang barking at his heels. But all this Abner heeded not. Onward he went, regardless of the way, up hill and down dale, through wood and thicket, and deep ploughed meadow, neither stopping nor diverting his course, till he reached his mother's door.

Here then was the end of all the hopes which Abner had cherished for four long weeks. His own chosen

one—the laughing Janette Grover—one whose full, and tender, and blushing charms, he had feasted in delicious madness each holy day—was lost—gone—published. And to such a rival! The dapper upstart of the corner, William Depew, whose fine feathers were all his fortune, and whose speedy downfall every grave person in town was daily predicting! he, the roving, penniless do-nothing, to woo and win the chosen one of the thriftiest young man in town!

With the detail of several succeeding years I am totally unacquainted, further than that Abner labored upon his farm, a taciturn and money-making bachelor. A month ago I met him far up among the mountains, driving a sleek fat horse, attached to a handsome trolley, filled with a bevy of children and a gentle-looking lady—the whole furnishing a fine picture of domestic contentment.

“And could he, after such an event, marry again?” some fair believer in broken hearts may be ready to exclaim. I asked him so myself, and “long Abner” answered only by a knowing glance at the laughing ones about him.

COUNTRY BURIAL PLACES.

by Mrs. F. T. C.

Go to the dull church-yard, and see
The hillocks of mortality;
Where proudest man is only found
By a small hillock on the ground.

* * * * *

From the spot

Where the sweet maiden, in her blooming years,
Cut off, was laid with streaming eyes, and hands
That trembled as they placed her there, the rose
Sprung modest, on bowed stalk, and better spoke
Her graces, than the proudest monument.—BRYANT.

In passing through New England, a stranger will be struck with the variety, in taste and feeling, respecting burial places. Here and there may be seen a solitary grave in a desolate and dreary pasture lot, and anon under the shade of some lone tree, the simple stone reared by affection to the memory of one known and loved by the humble fireside only. There, on that gentle elevation, sloping green and beautiful towards the south, is a family enclosure, adorned with trees, and filled with the graves of the household. How many breaking hearts have there left the loved till that bright morning! Here in this garden, beside the vine-covered arbor, and amidst the shrubbery which her own hand planted, is the monument to the faithful wife and lov-

ing mother. How appropriate ! How beautiful ! And to the old landholders of New England, what motive to hold sacred from the hand of lucre, so strong as the ground loved by the living as the burial place of *their* dead !

Apropos to burying in gardens, I heard a story of an old man, who was bent on interring his wife in his garden, despite of the opposition of all his neighbors to his doing so. Indeed, the old fellow avowed this as his chief reason, and to all their entreaties and deprecations, and earnest requests, he still declared he would do it. Finding everything they could do to be of no avail, the people bethought themselves of a certain physician, who was said to have great influence over the old man, and who owned an orchard adjoining the very garden ; so, going to him in a body, they besought him to attempt to change the determination of his obstinate friend. The doctor consented to do so, and went. After offering his condolence on the loss of his wife, and proffering any aid he might be able to render at the funeral, the doctor said, " I understand you intend to bury your deceased wife in your garden."

" Yes," answered the old man, " I do. And the more people object, the more I'm determined to do it !"

" Right !" replied the doctor, with an emphatic shake of the head, " Right ! I applaud the deed. I'd bury her there, if I was you. The boys are always stealing the pears from my favorite tree that overhangs your garden, and by and by you'll die, Uncle Diddle,

and they'll bury you there too, and then I'm sure that the boys will never dare steal another pear."

"No!" I'll be hanged if I bury her there," said the old man in great wrath. "I'll bury her in the grave-yard!"

New England can boast her beautiful places of sepulture, but as a common thing, they are too much neglected, and attractive only to the lover of oddities, and curious old epitaphs. Occasionally you may see a strangely shaped tomb, or as in a well-known village, a knocker placed on the door of his family vault by some odd specimen of humanity. When asked the reason for doing so singular a thing, he gravely replied, that "when the old gentleman should come to claim his own, the tenants might have the pleasure of saying, 'not at home,' or of fleeing out of the back door."

In passing through these neglected grounds, you will often find some touchingly beautiful scriptural allusion—some apt quotation, or some emblem, so lovely and instructive, that the memory of it will go with you for days. Here in a neglected spot, and amid a cluster of raised stones, is the grave of the stranger clergyman's child, who died on its journey. The inscription is sweet, when taken in connection with the portion of sacred history from which the quotation is made. "Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." Again, the only inscription is an emblem,—a butterfly rising from the chrysalis. Glorious thought, embodied in emblem so singular! "Sown in corruption raised in incorruption!"

Then come you to some strangely odd, as for instance

“ Here lies John Auricular,
Who in the ways of the Lord walked perpendicular.”

Again,

“ Many a cold wind o’er my body shall roll,
While in Abraham’s bosom I’m a feasting my soul ;”

appropriate certainly, as the grave was on a cold north east slope of one of our bleak hills.

Again, a Dutchman’s epitaph for his twin babes :

“ Here lies two babes, dead as two nits,
Who shook to death mit ague fits,
They was too good to live mit me,
So God he took ’em to live mit he.”

There is the grave of a young man, who, dying suddenly, was eulogized with this strange aim at the sublime :

“ He lived,
He died !”

Not a hundred miles from Boston, is a gravestone, the epitaph upon which, to all who knew the parties, borders strongly upon the burlesque. A widower, who within a few months buried his wife and adopted daughter, the former of whom was all her life long a thorn in his flesh, and whose death could not but have been a relief, wrote thus,—“ They were lovely and beloved in their lives, and in death were not divided.” Poor man, well *he* knew how full of strife and sorrow

an evil woman can make life ! He was worn to a shadow before her death, and his hair was all gone. Many of the neighbors thought surely that *he* well knew what had become of it, especially as it disappeared by the handful. But the grave covers all faults ; and those who knew her could only hope, that she might rest from her labors, and her works follow her !

On a low sandy mound far down on the Cape, rises a tall slate stone, with fitting emblems, and epitaph as follows—

“ Here lies Judy and John,
That lovely pair,
John was killed by a whale,
And Judy sleeps here.”

But leaving these so strange, let us come to the grave of a valued and holy mother, whose beautifully appropriate inscription is briefly this—“ She walked with God and was not, for he took her.” And hard by is a gentle mound, sheltered by a monument of our native marble, and closely by its side, springs that moss-rose tree. How fair the daises grow on the mound, and how they linger, mingling their simple blossoms with the low white roses which bloom around ! Who sleeps here, so sunny, and bright, and cheerful, it seems that no gloom can come ? It is the grave of a being so gentle, that though the suns and frosts of many seasons have visited the spot, it is still fresh and verdant in the memory of all hearts. Nature had given her personal charms of no ordinary character, and from a

tiny girl, as she was when we first met, she was beautiful as the young fawn. Who, that ever saw, can forget the dark expressive eye, the noble forehead and features, the complexion so brilliant that the eye of the stranger was at once riveted by it? Who can forget that red and white,—the hue that came and went, deepened and paled, as she spoke? And withal, how little was the beauty of the person, compared to the intellectual worth,—to the heart?

Her mother was early laid in the grave, and the father, a man of sedentary habits and great research, turned to this, their first born, to fill the void, as well as she might, made in the lovely circle. Thus early ushered into the school of womanhood, she grew thoughtful and mature beyond her years. In our early rambles, encouraged not more by her father's approbation, than her own taste, she sought through all the kingdoms of nature, to bring home her little store of insects, and flowers, and minerals new to us, to throw at her father's feet. In this way she acquired a love for all the beautiful in nature, and true to its legitimate influence on the heart and mind, it softened and refined her own.

Nor was it strange that one so gifted by nature, and who made study her delight, grew lovelier in her maturity, and came to be the little sun of the circle in which she moved. She loved all that was bright and cheerful in the world around her, and the scenery amid which her lot was cast, fostered this love, until it be-

came a passion, embracing earth and sky. No light or shade, no brilliant hue or delicate tinge, escaped her eye, ever seeking for the beautiful ; and cold indeed must have been the heart, which could have wandered with her over hill and valley, and not have breathed in the pure spirit which filled her.

She grew to womanhood. She was beloved. She loved as woman will and must love. Soft and passionate words were breathed into her soul by the son of a vernal clime, but alas ! all that their souls wished might not be, and true to the filial piety within her, she bade him farewell, never again to meet.

But why linger along the paths fair and pure, of one better fitted for higher enjoyments and purer happiness, than ours ? Each day added to the culture of a vigorous mind, to the purity of a lovely heart, to the perfection of a sweet character. Each year bound her more closely to those she loved ; each new grace of person and mind, became another link to the bright chain, which held her heart in pleasant thralldom with friends, and family, and home.

What meant that bright spot on her cheek, as the clouds and mists of winter were receding before the smiles of spring ! Why look that loving family with anxious hearts on their idol ! Alas, consumption had marked its beautiful victim, and was decking her for the sacrifice ! The season came, of all others dearest to her, but she was to turn from its beauties to her weary pillow and her dying chamber. She, who had

so delighted to live, and to whom the world had been so fair, was now to rest her purity of spirit in the house of sadness and decline. How lovely was that decline ; how cheerful was that sick chamber, rendered so by the quietness and gentleness of its fair tenant ! Deprived by her disease of conversation, her mind turned within, and that which had been her solace and delight in health, was her own in sickness. She tended the mignonette which grew in her window, admired and arranged the flowers which kind friends constantly sent to cheer her, and often, as strength permitted, was drawn to the window at sunset, to feast her eyes on the glorious heavens.

Nor did her pleasures end here. Each sunny day saw her easy carriage slowly pursuing some romantic ride, following as nearly as she could a favorite streamlet, or seeking an old familiar prospect. Oh, the sweetness of those rides, shared as they always were by affectionate hearts ! How beautiful she looked, slowly passing through the places so soon to know her no more for ever ; her dark hair partly shading her fair brow, and that cheek, on which the brightest bloom ever rested. Her head reclined on that snowy pillow, and the smile so placid and gentle, so full of resignation and hope, that it spoke to the heart of every beholder ! So passed she on to the day of her death, that sweet summer morning, when with the voice of birds and the incense of all created things, her spirit ascended to its native skies. Lovely, yea, bright and

glorious, was that young spirit's exit ; but too sacred was the death scene, for any but the eye of affection to witness ! Let it suffice, that one so lovely, so beloved, could walk, through the strength of our holy religion, without fanaticism, without transports, but with calm trust in the Redeemer, through the dark valley, making the beautiful language of his holy book the last words of her lips, the last action of her blessed life. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

And now see that sweet form arrayed for the grave ! "There is no terror here !" Fallen asleep is on all around. The smile of love still plays around those features ! The rose placed by the hand of affection lies meekly on her bosom ! The vase of flowers her own hand yesterday arranged, still stands by her bed-side ; the little pocket Bible, her daily companion, is close beside it ; the workstand, the books, the basket, are all as she used to have them. Not one thing speaks of death, but that meekly closed eye and that motionless form !

"Who that hath bent him o'er the dead,
Ere the first day of death hath fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,
Before decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,
And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,

The languor of that placid cheek,—
 And but for that sad shrouded eye
 That fires not, wins not, weeps not now,
 And but for that chill, changeless brow,

* * * * *

Yes, but for these, and these alone,
 Some moments, aye one treach'rous hour,
 He still might doubt the tyrant's power ;
 So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
 The first, last look by death revealed."

Her funeral was such as we often see in the country,
 for maidens lovely and beloved by all. Let me die
 and be buried in the country ! Loved by all, wept by
 all, and followed to the grave by voluntary affection,
 not in obedience to courtesy ! Let me lie down in some
 green mound, where the sun shines ever, and where

Soft airs, and song, and birds, and bloom,
 Should keep them lingering by my tomb,
 Then to their softened hearts should bear
 The thought, of what has been,
 And speak of one who cannot share
 The gladness of the scene ;
 Whose part in all the pomp that fills
 The circuit of the summer hills,
 Is,—that her grave is green.

It was a bright summer afternoon, as the sun was
 casting its lengthened shadows, when, borne on the
 shoulders of youths, who had, in her life and vigor, felt
 it a happiness to attend her, she was carried from the
 door of her father, to the house appointed for all liv-

ing. Many a heart was weary, to see her so lately bright and buoyant with life, thus carried forth : but still, as the old man bowed on his staff and gazed, he felt that " heaven was not so far off as he used to think it," and the youth could but feel, that the sting of death was indeed taken away. Long and deeply solemn was that procession, and as the low deep tones of the bell were borne on the breeze, none spake ; but each silently communed with his own heart !

Arrived at the open grave, all stood silent ; the men with raised hats, and the women with bowed heads ; until, softly and sweetly, music swelled up on the summer air, and borne aloft, as on angels' wings, seemed like the choir above. Sung by unaffectedly loving hearts, the words of our sacred poet never seemed so beautiful or appropriate—

" Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb,
Take this new treasure to thy trust ;
And give these sacred relics room
To seek a slumber in the dust."

The voices died gently away ; when the father, turning to the companions of his deceased idol, with an effort which none but those who knew him might think possible, spoke. He spoke to them of death, of the grave—not dreary and desolate, but, like the one opened before them, into whose dark bosom shone the light of glory—the brightness of a better world. Few were his words ; but as he spoke of the hope which cheered

her through the gloom of death, and of the glorious resurrection morning, oh ! who there did not breathe the prayer of the prophet, " Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his ! "

As he ceased, six of her intimate female friends, dressed entirely in white, with bouquets of white and green, stepped forward ; and as the spectators turned to leave the sacred spot, instead of the hollow sound of " dust to dust and ashes to ashes," he saw only the flowers, strewn by loving hands over her coffin !

" Oh not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend of ours,

So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers."

COUNTRY WEDDINGS.

Orl. I pr'ythee, who doth he trot withal ?

Ros. Marry, he trots hard with a young maid, between the contract of her marriage and the day it is solemnized : if the interim be but a se'nnight, time's pace is so hard, that it seems the length of seven years.

I WAS once present, as the minister's guest, at a wedding, far up in the wilds of New Hampshire. It was at the house of a new settler, who had just cleared his farm and erected his buildings ; and, as he said himself, " was in but a poor fix to accommodate wedding guests." He was a good-natured, jovial soul ; like many men whom one meets on the borders of the wild lands, fond of a roving life ; working hard, but never contented ; ever dissatisfied with what he already possessed, and eager for something new. He had just moved from the log cabin, which had sheltered and warmed him for half a dozen years, into the large unfurnished house where we were, and was as uneasy and ill at home, in his new abode, as fable makes the snail to have been in the cast-off shell of the lobster.

We were ushered into a large unfurnished room, crowded with people of both sexes. On the table, set

into the middle of the room, were burning two large tallow candles, each fixed into a huge potato, shaved and drilled to the purpose. On the wall, directly in front of where it was intended the bridal pair should stand, four other candles were fastened by steel tined forks; one of which, stooping a little from its perpendicular, was sending long channels of tallow down to the floor. The guests were seated on wooden benches around the room, still and fixed as a row of pins in paper; and, as the light from time to time required snuffing, some lusty fellow would rise, and, wetting his fingers from his mouth before each operation, would render the service, in a measure, that, I am sure, the unpractised could never imitate.

As we entered the room all was silent as the house of mourning, except that two persons rose to give me, as the parson's guest, the seat of honor. After a few minutes, during which not a word, even in a whisper, was uttered, the parties to be joined in lawful wedlock entered the room, arm in arm; the groom, a tall, brawny man of thirty-five, or thereabouts, and a widower, as I afterwards learned; and the bride, a fat, red-cheeked beauty, of, perhaps, ten years less. They passed along, curving with the circle in their progress, until they came opposite to the lights upon the wall, when, wheeling about, they stood bolt upright, waiting for the parson to begin.

I have no hand for the description of a lady's dress, but I cannot forbear telling my fair readers, that the

bride was arrayed in a sarsanet cambric morning robe, I should call it, tied up and down in front, over a petticoat of bright red flannel, with blue worsted hose, and cowhide shoes peeping from below ; a string of gold beads surrounding the neck, and a dark horn comb ambitiously aspiring above the croppled-crowned head of whitest hair.

The ceremony proceeded on this wise. The minister rose, and with him the people. A short and appropriate prayer was made, to which several responsive amens were uttered, when the clergyman requested the certificate of publishment ; a duty which the law requires of every one invested with the power of pronouncing the wedding bond. The bridegroom, after fumbling unsuccessfully in several pockets, recollected that he had left it in his hat, and started off to obtain it. The bride, meanwhile, stood waiting, unembarrassed by the crowd, the occasion, or the awkwardness of her partner's absence. The former soon returned, and handing it to the clergyman, resumed his place. After casting his eyes over the paper, crumpled and soiled almost to the point of illegibility, the service re-commenced.

" You will take the woman by the right hand ! " said the clergyman, in a quiet but clear voice. The bridegroom, however, stood unmoved, and looking before him into vacancy, was whistling to himself in an under-tone, but loud enough to be heard in the perfect stillness all over the room ; waiting a moment, and supposing himself unheard, he repeated the direction,

“ You must take the woman by the right hand ! ”

Still the bridegroom stirred not, nor ceased from his whispered whistling ; the bride looked down and giggled, and the parson’s face grew red, with what he deemed an offered insult. He was about speaking again, when the host interposed, crying out from the corner,

“ He’s *deaf*, parson, speak louder ! ”

The clergyman then raised his voice, and pronouncing, in a loud tone, “ You will take the woman by the right hand ! ” the bridegroom obeyed, and the couple, hand in hand, stood before him, unmoved as the two discrete statues in the Alhambra, waiting for the cabalistic words. After a brief exhortation on the solemnity of the act, and the responsibilities and obligations of married life, the clergyman, asking each party to repeat the vows, pronounced them man and wife ; and supposing his duties discharged, sat down. Still no one moved ; the people stood around in the same fixed attitude, and the wedded pair kept their places in the middle of the room, all evidently looking for something more. What was to be done ? My friend had seated himself, expecting others now to take the direction of affairs ; but at the unexpected continuance of the stillness, he began to fear that some essential part of the service must have been omitted ; while I, coming under the wing of his invitation, albeit far enough removed from holy orders, was in great alarm, lest the people assembled were expecting something from myself.

Unused to such an appearance, and not knowing if it was the habit of the place, and fearing also some wrong construction of what he had done, the clergyman began to look around, when the good-natured voice of our host again interposed, exclaiming,

“She’s waiting for you to buss her, parson !”

This was enough ; and the good man, glad to be relieved from his awkward position by any sacrifice, immediately stepped forward, and kissing the plump, red lips obtruded before him, which returned him a hearty smack, and shaking hands with the bridegroom, fell back behind the crowd. My turn came next, and though for once in my life I would gladly have practised upon the old Roman’s moral,

“*Oscula mulierum jugiantur,*”

there was no getting off ; so advancing with all the gallantry I could muster, I performed my duty, and retired. Each individual of the party then followed our example, the men kissing the bride, the women being kissed by the bridegroom, and each amorous swain, joining his lips to every pretty girl he met, until the noise, repeated and re-repeated, in every part of the room, reminded me of nothing so much as an irregular volley of small-arms at a militia muster.

Meanwhile, the hostess had retired to send in refreshments ; and the host, opening a cupboard in the corner, and setting out a huge stone jug, and a salver, upon which were two glass tumblers, a sugar bowl,

and a pitcher of water, invited the clergyman and myself to drink. However indisposed I might have been to partake of the proffered beverage, I did not dare decline, well knowing that nothing so soon gives offence to the poor man, as to refuse his hospitality ; so stepping to the table, and pouring from the jug a spoonful of the spirits, and dashing it well with water, I drank to the happiness of the newly-married pair. A glass each was then mixed for the bride and groom, then the others followed, each man preparing a well-sugared sling for some lady, and all using the same glasses from which we had just drank.

The company were then invited into another room—or rather to another part of the house, since the only room partitioned off in the large two-storied tabernacle, was the one we had been in—where a substantial repast of beef and pork, turkeys and chickens, baked beans and pudding, had been provided for the guests. Around the table were long boards, set upon upright logs, for seats, and each man crowded beside his lady-love, to do justice to the smoking honors of the feast. In the centre of the table, upon a square deal board, with legs of sawed cobs, stood the bridal-loaf, iced with maple sugar, and figured with squares, triangles, and diamonds, of white parched corn; while around it, in concentric circles, were asteroids of baked custards and pumpkin pies.

The guests did ample justice to the savory viands; the host carved, and filled each plate with no niggardly

hospitality, as its contents disappeared; the mugs of foaming flip eddied in quiet and constant flow from side to side; the elderly dames chattered fast over the fresh cups of tea, which the mistress of the mansion dispensed; and gaiety, good-humor, and broad jests were rife all round the board. The clergyman and myself took leave long before the festivities of the evening had come to their height, and from what I afterwards heard, there must have been a most uproarious time; and many of the guests might have furnished a fine picture of Bibo, in the catch, when he wakes in Charon's boat :

" When Bibo thought fit from this world to retreat,
As full of good flip as an egg's full of meat,
He waked in the boat, and to Charon he said,
That he would be rowed back, for he was not yet dead."

This cannot be said to furnish a fair specimen, by any means, of country weddings. There are always to be found, on the borders of the forest, a class of men, who care little for the restraints, not to say the decencies, of civilized life, and who become, as years efface the teachings of earlier years, near akin to the savage, in their tastes, and pleasures, and love of excitement. A wedding in the country is always, to be sure, a matter of importance, as furnishing an occasion for the largest gatherings the family ever see, but then it is ever regarded as of most serious import, and its enjoyments, and festivities are conducted with all that regard for

temperance and sobriety, which constitute a leading feature in the character of the inhabitants.

To the female portion of the community a wedding is every where an event of note; but far more so, I believe, in the country, than in the city. The interest they take in all the rumors of courtships and engagements; the eagerness with which they listen to the publishment of the banns; the readiness with which they lend their aid to all preparations antecedent to the event; and the delight they manifest in its consummation; are to me mysteries deeper than the sybil's. The first look in the newspaper is towards the marriage list; the first glance, on entering church, to the wafered post, on which each publishment appears; the first news in every letter, the first remark at every call, the first inquiry at every gathering, is always of weddings just gone by, or weddings just to come.

I would I could take my readers to the wedding of some fair daughter of a substantial, independent farmer, in the Granite State. What preparations have been made for celebrating it! What interest it has excited in the expectation! What heart-burnings in many a damsel, lest her name should not be enrolled among the number of the guests to be invited! The old father has thought of it at market and at home, for she is his own pet girl, and nobly does he mean to furnish her for the new station she will fill! The mother has dreamed of it night after night; and talked of it early and late; and consulted about the get-

tings and doings with neighbors and friends ; and journeyed to shop thrice in the week for silks, and muslins, and laces, and ribands, to deck the loved one withal ; and sewed, and quilted, and cut, and shaped, such piles of sheets, and pillow cases, and table cloths, and beds, and carpets ; and drawn from the deep chests such stores of rare housewiving, as poor folk know not of ; and all for the brave girl whom she loves as her second self !

The sisters too have toiled for the elected one ; fair cousins have come from afar to render their aid ; and her own chosen friend of academy days, to whom she has entrusted, in the long epistles, that every month have burdened the post bags, all her hopes and fears during the courtship, all her joy and happiness in the engagement, and with whom she had made a mutual vow, that the one who should first be led to the altar, should claim of the other the bridesmaid's duty, is there, to advise, and consult, and direct ; and oh, the merry times they have had, as with fast chattering tongues they have bent over the framed quilt, or plyed the rapid needle through the home-made linen ; and the rare jokes that have been cracked, as the frilled night-cap or white-ruffled robe, have been fitted upon the blushing and happy girl.

The publishment then comes, either posted upon the door of the church, or read aloud after service, for three successive Sundays. The law says, " three public days," and some are bold enough to take advantage of a town

meeting, or session, or militia muster, to avoid the publicity so long before-hand, which attends the usual way ; but upon this public opinion decidedly frowns, and the good old custom of three Sabbath days, most generally obtains. Then the sending of the invitations occupies several days, not with the showy fanfarronade of embossed paper or engraved cards, but in the simplicity of olden-time customs ; the plough boy, dressed in his Sunday suit, being mounted upon the switch-tailed mare, and riding from house to house, and corner to corner, in conscious dignity of the important messages he bears ; uttering in loudest voice to the comer at the door, " Mister and Miss Moulton wants you and your folks to come to Nancy's wedding, next week Wednesday."

The stir in the neighborhood, after the invitations have been received, like the moving of waters in some still bay on the lowlands of Holland, is productive of disorder enough. The quiet sleep-loving people are all astir ; nothing in or out of doors goes on with accustomed regularity ; the woman's work is all behind hand, for the thoughts and preparations for the wedding. Articles of dress are drawn forth and talked over at frequent convocations in the chamber ; bits of lace or riband, and all sorts of carefully-kept finery are taken from press and bureau ; colors are compared and contrasted ; different styles of dress are debated ; new and old fashions discussed with never flagging interest ; and many a call is made on the good-man's purse, to

properly furnish forth the dame and daughters for the important occasion.

To the storekeeper these days become a full gathered harvest. Many a fat cheese finds its way to his scales, and rolls of rich golden butter are bartered, by anxious cheapeners of the tasteful wares, that lie so temptingly in his show-case. Business now at the corner is brisk enough ; the shop-boy no longer stretches himself listlessly by the door, for chaises and wagons stand fastened to the posts, and crowd the sheds, and spectacled old ladies gather like garrulous worshippers, around his full strewed counter. Neighbors meet of evenings to make inquiries and talk the matter over ; rumors of the dress the bride is to wear have gone abroad ; gifts of the lover to his bride-to-be, and other gifts which he has snatched or lured in his frequent comings and goings from her he loves, have been seen and reported by sharp-eyed mantua-makers ; the origin of the attachment at some fair or ball, and the progress it made from time to time as chance threw them together ; a former love-affair of his—a discarded lover of hers—a dream—a sign—a strange presentiment—each and all are nuts to crack for the never weary gossipers. Old men listen and nod, and recall again the days of early courtships ; and young men dream of the time when a new house, next door to father's, shall hold for them a wife ; as the stream of conversation goes,

—“an inexhaustless flow continual round !”

The eventful day comes at last, and the fair girl rises for the last time from her lonely pillow. She is happy, yet full of fear ; joyful in the consummation of all her wishes, yet sad in the sundering so many ties of home, and childhood, and loved ones. A blue sky bends over her, but its glad light goes and comes, as clouds flit quickly and darkly across the horizon. The quaint carvings and time-worn furniture of the patriarchal mansion,

——“ itself with years
Grown gray,”

become dearer to her, as the time approaches she must leave them ; and the very cows crowding the barn-yard, the humming bees, the old house-dog sleeping in the sunshine, and the gentle, purring cat ; all are this morning, to her heart, like the faces of familiar friends. Her own pleasant room too, is more pleasant than ever before, and it is not without tears that she looks from the window over the green meadows, and thick orchard trees, and far off hills, that have met her first morning gaze ever since the earliest days of infancy ; nor that she hears the chirping of the same red-breast, who has built his nest in the branches shading the eave-troughs, ever since she can remember, and whose annual return she looked for in childhood, like some absent one of the household—

“ And while she listens to it yet,
She listens till she does beget
That golden time again,”

with its joyousness of spring fields and fresh verdure of vernal woods.

To the other female members of the family, however, the whole day is one of unmitigated labor and perplexity. Things undone, and things forgotten, crowd like troubled spirits around the hurried hands of the housewife. In kitchen or larder, though nothing is done, but what has direct reference to the event of the evening, no progress seems to be made. The farmer frets that the cows are left unmilked, or the hogs unfed, and the hired men at the lack of food or ill cooked viands on their table. Everything for the occasion is arranged and changed, and re-arranged, so often, that all becomes utter confusion. From mistress to maidens, everybody's head is completely turned, and discord reigns triumphant. This way and that way—in hall and kitchen and parlor,—“up stairs, down stairs, and in my lady's chamber,” nothing is heard but the loud din of women's tongues; and wo to the luckless dog, or still more luckless wight, who chances in their way! An uneasy devil from old Babel seems to possess them so that even the little maiden aunt, her gown pinned up behind over the bright dyed petticoat, and red clocked stockings, and her well crammed patchwork pocket flapping by her side, waddles uneasily from room to room, and flusters and bustles, like a full cropped bantam. So passes off the morning, and noon,—“to hungry workmen drear and dinnerless,”—and afternoon,—till

“Evening comes at last, and shuts the scene.”

At early candle-lighting the guests begin to assemble. Wagons, chaises, carryalls, and tilburys drive to the door, let out their crowded seats, and pass round to the farm-yard; saddled and pillioned horses stand fastened at the huge block before the door; foot people pass through the narrow gate and thunder at the heavy knocker; and boys and servants crowd round the parlor windows, to catch some glimpse of the wondrous ceremony. In the rooms, the utmost propriety and dignity of demeanor prevails. No loud laugh or chattering tongues, no flirting or coquetting,—no hoyden romping—no assumed importance, or self-complacent sneers—no impertinent questions, or envious remarks. On the contrary, the mothers and daughters all take their seats on the wood-painted chairs, set in concentric circles about the room, and nothing breaks the stillness, except it be a passing inquiry for a sick neighbor, or a proffered pinch of snuff from a good grandam's box.

The men stand without the door, in the halls or kitchen, waiting for the parson; on whose coming they enter the room, and, crowding behind the chairs and about the door, stand patiently awaiting the ceremony. Meanwhile, some dapper and brisk-tongued varlet moves round among the sitters, and finding all to his mind, ushers in the bride and her maids, the bridegroom and his friends. No little trouble follows to put each one in the right position; when the parson rising, and with him all the ladies, the ceremony, such as we

have described, begins and ends. The affectionate embrace of the relatives, and the gratulations of the guests then pass round, and all retire as before to their quiet sitting, in expectation of the wedding cake and wine. This comes in on huge salvers, borne by maid servants, and is handed in regular order to each individual, beginning with the ladies, and ending with boys and domestics, until all are supplied. Baskets filled with neatly wrapped parcels of cake are then passed, from which each mother takes as she likes for the children at home, and each maiden to dream upon at night under her pillow.

The coming in of the refreshments seems to be the pivot on which hinges the merry-making of the occasion. Before this, all has been of the gravest air—old ladies solemnly reflecting over their quiet pinches of maccoboy—and old gentlemen apparently lost in contemplation of the framed scripture pieces which are piously hung around the wall. Now all is changed; and the heretofore silent crowd is waking up to unwonted animation. At first, a middle-aged, motherly woman addresses a remark to her next neighbor about the weather, or the wind, or last Sunday's sermon, which breaks over the surface of stillness, heretofore filling the room; the neighbor replies, and a third person leans over to confirm it; then an undertoned chatter of numerous voices breaks from a crowd of young girls in the corner; then a loud laugh—a hearty joke—a jovial response—until, like the letting out of waters, the room overflows with mirth and laughter.

Supper soon interposes—and such a supper as rich country farmers only can give. Every department of the farm-house and homestead has been taxed to furnish forth the liberal board, and every appropriate dish of every meal is summoned here to do service to the hasty appetites of cheer-loving yeomanry. The grace of the parson ended, each person taking a seat at the long tables running round the room, and young and old, grave and gay, gentle and simple, men, women and children, enlist without further ceremony in the duties and pleasures of the feast. No boarding-school miss, burdened with fastidious tastes—no city coxcombs, affecting squeamish appetites, are expected or provided for at the wedding banquet of the country; but men and women of robust and healthy appetites, and strong digestions, in whose nosology dyspepsy is a disease unknown, and who have scarce dreamed that

“An excellent thing did God bestow on man
When he did give him a good stomach.”

Fish, flesh, and fowl, appear and disappear in quick succession, moistened with foaming cider, or gooseberry wine; puddings, pies, and pastry of every kind, crowd on in rich and rare profusion, in their turn; and comfits, jellies, and whipped creams, and the whole nameless route of light armed dishes,—in defiance of all military tactics,—bring up the rear. The sparkling champagne is not wanting, nor the rich metheglin, choicest product of skilful housewifery,—each, as the inventive toast or droll story goes the rounds, adding

to the merriment of the boisterous and fun-loving guests.

Thus the evening passes on, the older portion of the company departing after supper, the youths and maidens lingering for plays and dances, where mirth may circulate, unchecked by the rebukes of gray heads, and graver faces. A few wild blades, whose intimacy in the family gives warrant for their excesses, pass all bounds of custom in their protracted stay, taking most especial delight in the evident uneasiness and growing impatience of the too-anxious bridegroom. Some even insist on the observance of blowing out the light, after the bridal pair are in bed, but, so far as I know, the custom is too obsolete, to be ever, now-a-days, revived. Before twelve at midnight, the last lingerer has departed, and while the loud shouts of the homeward bound merry-makers ring far off on the ear, the doors are fastened, the family have retired, and the happy bride, leaving father and mother, finds a new home in the breast of a fond and devoted husband.

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